

TREATISE ON SPIRITUAL JOURNEYING AND WAYFARING

ATTRIBUTED TO

Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī Baḥr al-Ulum

Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Husaynī Tihrānī

Tawus Raja

Seyyed Hossein Nasr

Great Books of the Islamic World

© 2013, Kazi Publications, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the written permission of the publishers.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Treatise on Spiritual Journeying and Wayfaring Attributed to: Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm Edited, annotated and introduced by: Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī

Translated by: Tawus Raja

Series editor: Seyyed Hossein Nasr

1. Islam. 2. Sufism. I. Title. ISBN 10: 1-56744-832-1 ISBN 13: 978-1-56744-832-0

Cover design: Liaquat Ali

Cornerstones are Allah and Muhammad connected by Bism Allāh al-Raḥnān al-Raḥn̄m (In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate).

Logo design by Mani Ardalan Farhadi

The cypress tree bending with the wind, the source for the paisley design, is a symbol of the perfect Muslim, who, as the tree, bends with the wind of God's Will.

Published by Great Books of the Islamic World, Inc.

Distributed by KAZI Publications, Inc. 3023 W. Belmont Avenue Chicago IL 60618

Tel: 773-267-7001; FAX: 773-267-7002 email: info@kazi.org / www.kazi.org

Contents

Fo	Foreword								
By Hajj Muhammad Legenhausen									
Tra	Translator's Introduction								
Ed	Editor's Introduction								
TREATISE ON SPIRITUAL JOURNEYING AND WAYFARING									
			By 'Allāmah Baḥr al-'Ulūm						
Pa	rt I		verview of the Spiritual Journey, its nation, and the Realm of Sincerity	11					
	Chap	ter 1	The Number Forty	13					
Chapter 2		ter 2	An Overall Knowledge of the Destination						
Chapter 3		ter 3	Entering the Realm of Sincerity and Knowing about it						
Chapter 4		ter 4	Traveling through the Forty Stages of the Realm of Sincerity						
Pa	rt II	Two	Descriptions of the Journey toward God	55					
	Chap	ter 5	A Brief Overview of How to Journey toward God	57					
Chapter 6		ter 6	A Detailed Description of How to Journey toward God	7 67					
Part III Final			Remarks	101					
Chapter 7		ter 7	The Results of the Spiritual Journey	103					
Chapter 8		ter 8	The Author's Method of Invocation	107					

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYING AND WAYFARING

ANNOTATIONS ON THE TREATISE

By Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ţihrānī

Notes on Chapter One	117			
Notes on Chapter Two	135			
Notes on Chapter Three	138			
Notes on Chapter Four	151			
Notes on Chapter Five	185			
Notes on Chapter Six	204			
Notes on Chapter Seven	267			
Notes on Chapter Eight	271			
Notes on Prominent Figures Cited in the Book				
Bibliography				
ndex of Quranic Verses				
General Index				

TO THE MASTER OF OUR TIME WITH WHOM OUR HEARTS FOREVER SHALL RHYME.

آن سفر ککرده که صد قافله دل تمسسره اوست هر کجبیاهست خدایا به سسلامت دارش

That traveller with whom Our hearts are bound;
Wherever he is,
O Lord, keep him sound.

Hāfiz, ghazal 277

Transliteration

Arabic Letters

symbol	transliteration	<u>symbol</u>	<u>transliteration</u>	
£	2	•	m	
ب	b	ن	n	
ت	t	و	w	
ث	th	٥	h	
5	j	ي	y	
ح	h	õ	ah; at	
خ	kh	ى	á	
د	d			
ذ	dh	Long Vowels		
ر	r	1	ā	
j	z	و	ū	
س	s	ي	ĩ	
ش	sh			
ش ص	Ş	Short Vowels		
ض	d	1	а	
ط	ţ	:	u	
ظ	z	,	i	
٤	c			
غ	gh	Persian Letters		
ف	f	پ	p	
ق	q	€	ch	
ك	k	•	zh	
J	1	گ	g	
			_	

Foreword

This book consists of a compact treatise on spiritual journeying attributed to one of the distinguished masters of Islamic mysticism, Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (d. 1797), accompanied by annotations by Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī (d. 1995), who revived this treatise with meticulous edition, recension and annotation. The treatise is indeed a handbook of spirituality and a practical manual for those who wish to purify their souls, actualize the immense potentialities of their spirits, and free themselves from the captivating attachments of everyday life. It provides step-by-step instructions and guidelines on how to overcome the obstacles on the spiritual path, how to build one's relation with the Absolute (God), and how to experience the beautiful lights of spiritual ecstasy and bliss in one's heart.

There are two important works translated here, one is the treatise attributed to Baḥr al-cUlūm, and the other the commentary by Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī. So, it would be appropriate to say a few words about each of the authors, or their works, although each has been introduced in the editor's and translator's introductions, respectively. Instead, it may be useful for the reader to have some description of the historical setting in which the work attributed to Bahr al-cUlūm is believed to have been written.

Although his family stems from Burūjird in Iran, Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī ibn Murtaḍá al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī, known as Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (1155/1742-1212/1797), was born in Karbala and studied there and in Najaf. While other centers of Islamic learning were established by political authorities on which they were dependent, the community of scholars in Najaf and Karbala was relatively independent. Najaf and Karbala were officially a part of the Ottoman Empire, administered from Baghdad by the Mamluks, but in practice, it was the Shia ulama who provided the religious and political leadership there. Despite their prominence, however, they generally did not become large land owners, and they did not accept positions in the Ottoman imperial apparatus.¹

¹ See Litvak (1998), 1ff.

The treatise attributed to Baḥr al-ʿUlūm seems to have been written sometime in the late 12th/18th century. This was a period of great upheaval in the Islamic world. In Arabia, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703-1792) allied himself with the House of Saʿūd to establish an emirate that was hostile to the Ottoman Empire, and to Sufis and Shias. The hostility to the Shia eventually manifested itself in the Wahhabi attack on the "shrine cities" of Karbala and Najaf (which, along with Kāzimiyyah and Samarrāʾ, are known as the 'atabāt, thresholds) in 1802. The Ottomans were also weakened over the course of this period by wars and other armed conflicts with the British, Austrians, Russians, and Persians.

It was also during the 18th century that the Safavid dynasty that ruled the Persian Empire was overthrown with the rise to power of Nader Shah (r. 1736-1747). Before Nader Shah could consolidate power, however, the Safavids had established their throne in Tabriz, while the Hotaki Afghans took most of Iran, which they ruled from 1722-1729. Nader Shah was able to defeat the Afghans, retake Bahrain from the Arabs, and win control over the shrine cities. He then negotiated with the Ottoman Empire to exempt the shrine cities from taxes, and to allow the free travel of pilgrims from Iran in exchange for the formal retention of the cities within the Ottoman Empire. He also expropriated religious endowments (awgaf) in Iran to maintain his armies, and to weaken potential political rivalry from the ulama. Nader Shah also negotiated with the Ottomans over a period of years to have the Shia Jacfari figh recognized as a fifth jurisprudential madhhab in return for the prohibition of the public cursing of the first three caliphs. Despite his efforts, the Ottomans rejected the proposal, although the proposal was not championed by major Shia religious leaders either.

During the chaotic times of the Afghan invasion, many Iranians fled Iran and settled in Karbala and Najaf. After Nader Shah was assassinated by his own guards (according to legend, because he threatened to have them executed when they did not bring him a melon), there were years of violent struggle for power during the subsequent Afshar dynasty. Out of this struggle one of Nader Shah's generals, Karim Khan (r. 1760–1779) emerged victorious and established his own Zand dynasty, which lasted through a succession of eight more shahs and much civil strife, until the violent accession to power of the Qajars in 1794.

Baḥr al-ʿUlūm witnessed a paradigm shift in the study of Islamic law among Shia scholars, and the predominant Akhbari school¹ (favored by many Arab Shia scholars) gave way to the Usuli school (favored at that time by many Persian scholars) which continues to hold the allegiance of the majority of Imami scholars today.² The shift (which sometimes expressed itself in violent conflicts between adherents of these schools) is generally credited to Muḥammad Bāqir Waḥīd al-Bihbahānī (1706-1792), who was initially trained in the Usuli approach in his hometown of Isfahan, and then moved to Karbala.

The Akhbaris in Karbala had been led by the relatively moderate neo-Akhbari Shaykh Yūsuf ibn Aḥmad al-Baḥrānī (1695-1772), although other Akhbaris were so hostile that when Bihbahānī began to teach Usuli texts, he had to do so secretly. Nevertheless, many of the leading Usuli scholars, including Bihbahānī, Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, and Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ, also studied under Baḥrānī. In addition to condemning the Usulis as ritually impure, Baḥrānī also condemned the reading of philosophy and ʿirfān. Later, when the Usulis took power, Bihbahānī condemned the Akhbari as infidels through a pronouncement of takfīr.

The Akhbaris, who had only come to dominate the Shia madrasahs in the 1720's, favored a scripturalist approach to Islamic law, while the Usulis emphasized the need for an appeal to reason in cases where legal judgments could not be justified solely on the basis of explicit statements in the Qur'an and the narrations attributed to the Infallibles. The Akhbaris held that the standard collections of Shia hadiths were reliable, and could be used as a basis for legal judgments, while the Usulis contended that the hadith collections contained fabrications, and, hence, qualified scholars were needed to sort through the collections, making use of biographical reports about the chains of narrators in order to discern which narrations could be used to derive judgments of religious law. The Usulis also judged that some of the discretionary functions of the Infallibles could be executed by the jurists during the Major Occultation of the 12th Imam, such as permission to conduct the Friday Prayer. The po-

¹ For an account of the Akhbari school, see Gleave (2007a), and Gleave (2000) gives an account of the Usuli–Akhbari debate by comparing the views of Baḥrānī and Bihbahānī.

² See Cole (1985) for a discussion of the geographical and family allegiances to these schools of jurisprudence.

litical implications of the greater authority claimed by the Usulis for the clergy has been a topic of considerable scholarly investigation. ¹

After Bihbahānī, Baḥr al-ʿUlūm was considered to have the highest authority among the ulama, and after his demise, Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ. By the time of the second Qajar shah, Fatḥ-ʿAlī Shah (r. 1797-1834), the king sought permission from the Usuli Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ to govern; and again, when he went to war against the Russians, he sought and gained a declaration of jihad from Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ. (The war ended in 1813, after Napoleon's army had been defeated by the Russian winter. Fatḥ-ʿAlīʾs numerically superior forces were defeated by the Russian cannons, and the Golestan Treaty was signed, which ceded Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Dagestan to Russia.)

Bahr al-'Ulum was Bihbahani's most outstanding student, outstanding for the breadth of his knowledge. However, he was given the title "ocean of the sciences," Bahr al- Ulum, by a teacher with whom he studied philosophy and theology while visiting Mashhad: Mīrzā Mahdī Isfahānī Kurāsānī.² He was said to have been so knowledgeable in Sunni jurisprudence that he was able to teach it in Mecca for a couple of years while those who heard him lecture were unable to discern that the lectures were given by a Shia. His most often cited work is a book of biographies, Rijāl, most recently published in Najaf in three volumes (1965-1966). Bahr al-'Ulum married a relative of Bihbahānī; and Bihbahānī called him his "spiritual son." According to Bihbahānī, during the Greater Occultation of the 12th Imām (may God hasten his reappearance), every one hundred years there would appear a renewer of the true religion. In his biographical work, Bahr al-'Ulum states that there had been twelve such renewers, the last of whom, at that time, was his teacher, Bihbahānī.3 Bihbahānī and his illustrious students, who, in addition to Bahr al-'Ulum, included such luminaries as Kāshif al-Ghitā' and Mīrzā Abū al-Qasim Qummī,4 were able to promote the Usuli cause against their rivals. These rivals included not only the Akhbaris, but also Sufis, and later on the followers of Shaykh Ahmad al-Aḥsā i, who, like Baḥrānī, was from Bahrain, but who advocated esoteric doctrines derived from the Mandaeans of southern Iraq, claims based on

¹ See, for instance, Algar (1969), Heern (2011), Newmann (2005).

² 'Alīlū (1993), 34.

³ See Heern (2011), who cites Baḥr al-ʿUlūm's al-Fawāʾid al-rijāliyyah.

⁴ For an account of the relations between some of their students and the Iranian government, see Algar (1969), 45ff and Newmann (2005).

personal visions, and perhaps ideas traceable to the teachings of the Ismailis, Sufis, and other mystics. In the 1790's, Aḥṣā'ī was also able to study under some Usuli scholars, including Baḥr al-ʿUlūm.¹ It was from a splinter group of his followers that Bābism developed, an offshoot of which led to the founding of Bahā'ism in the mid nineteenth century.

After Bihbahānī's death, Baḥr al-Ulum moved to Najaf and was recognized as the successor to Bihbahani. As a result of his move, the center of Shia learning also shifted to Najaf, where it remained until Najaf was overtaken by Oum in the first half of the twentieth century. Bahr al-'Ulum was a master of organization and assigned the job of issuing religious rulings to Kāshif al-Ghitā'; another colleague was the prayer leader; and another was made responsible for litigation.² He was known for his outstanding piety, seclusion at the nearby Mosque of Kūfah, his sublime spiritual states and stations, and to this day it is widely believed that he had personal direct contact with the 12th Imam. There is also a report that he courteously debated with a group of Jews who were passing through on a pilgrimage to the nearby site of Dhū al-Kifl, alleged to be the last resting place of the prophet Ezekiel.³ Many miracles have also been attributed to Bahr al-'Ulum. The mysticism of Bahr al-'Ulum is a reflection of the religious milieu that had developed in the culture of the Shia ulama, which included a spectrum that runs from opponents of mysticism. to various kinds of mysticism, to those who were disciples of Sufi masters. This phenomenon has its roots in the earlier Safavid period of Persian history and earlier.

The Safavid dynasty had been based on the Safavid Sufi Order. With their accession to power, rival Sufi groups were suppressed, among the most important of which consisted of followers of Ni^cmatullāhī sheikhs. Although the Ni^cmatullāhī leadership had already moved to the Deccan in India at the invitation of the Sultan in Bidar, Ni^cmatullāhī family members remaining in Iran intermarried with the Safavids, and some Ni^cmatullāhīs held positions in the Sa-

¹ See Cole (2001) and Cole (1987).

² Litvak (1998), 47.

³ For a skeptical review of the reports of this encounter, see Moreen (1999), in which the objectivity of the reports is disputed since the only reports have been narrated by supporters of Baḥr al-cUlūm, and there are no reports of the debate that presents the Jewish perspective of the event.

favid bureaucracy. In the 1770's, the leader of the Nicmatullahi Order residing in the Nizamate of Hyderabad, India, Ridā-cAlī Shāh Dakkānī, sent Macsūm-cAlī Shāh Dakkānī, Shāh Tāhir, and Mast-cAli Shāh to reestablish the Order in Persia. Ma'sūm-'Alī Shāh attracted attention due to his ecstatic preaching, and found followers, particularly in Shiraz, Isfahan, Hamadan, and Kerman. Karim Khan Zand expelled the Sufis from his capital, Shiraz, where Macsum-cAlī Shāh had found a number of disciples, the most important of whom was to become known as Nūr-cAlī Shāh, whose father, the Friday Prayer leader in Tabas, also became a Sufi.² After their expulsion from Shiraz, Macsūm-cAlī Shāh returned to India, while Nūr-cAlī Shāh was welcomed by the governor of Isfahan. There he wrote a number of works of prose and poetry that are "replete with theopathic utterances, themes of ghulāt Shī'ism that seem to echo the verse of Shah Ismā'il, and criticisms of the Shia ulama.... Particularly provocative of ulama indignation was, no doubt, Nur-Alī Shāh's assertion that the Sufi master is the true deputy (nā'ib) of the Hidden Imam."3

After being expelled from Isfahan, Nūr-ʿAlī Shāh wandered to Mashhad and Herat, spent some years in Kerman, and then went to Karbala, where he and some followers arrived in 1792. There several members of the ulama became his disciples, including the *mujtahid* ʿAbd al-Ṣamad Hamadānī. Other ulama were outraged at the Sufi incursions into their ranks and appealed to Baḥr al-ʿUlūm to issue a *takfir* against the Sufis. According to some sources, Baḥr al-ʿUlūm met with Nūr-ʿAlī Shāh, was sympathetic toward him, and arranged for the Sufis to leave the shrine cities unharmed before the *takfir* against them could be acted upon. ⁴

Nūr-ʿAlī Shāh left Karbala, was welcomed by the ruler of Baghdad, Ahmad Pasha, and then went to Kermanshah where he met Maʿṣūm-ʿAlī Shāh, who had returned back to Iran from India. Muḥammad ʿAlī Bihbahānī, the son of Muḥammad Bāqir Waḥīd Bihbahānī, was the leading jurist in Kermanshah, and the author of a

¹ Newman (2006), 33; Algar (1995), 46.

² Pourjavady and Wilson (1978), 95.

³ Algar (1995), 46.

⁴ See Heern (2011), 79; Litvak (1998), 48; Lewisohn (1998), 448. While Lewisohn and others caution against exaggerating Baḥr al-ʿUlūm's sympathy with the Sufis, Pazouki claims that Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, like ʿAbd al-Ṣamad Hamadānī, became a follower of Nūr-ʿAlī Shāh. Pazouki (2003), 71.

vitriolic attack on Sufism. It is believed that Bihbahānī ordered the arrest and execution of Ma'ṣūm-'Alī Shāh. Another leading Ni'matullāhī Sufi, Mushtāq-'Alī Shāh, was killed in Kerman at the orders of Mullā 'Abd-Allāh Mujtahid in 1790 (allegedly for accompanying himself on the sitar—a small musical instrument similar to a lute—as he recited adhān, the call to prayer). Nūr-'Alī Shāh fled, and died in Mosul, allegedly by poisoning, again at the order of Bihbahānī.¹ Because of this, Muḥammad 'Alī Bihbahānī became infamous as the "Sufi killer" (ṣūfī-kush), who later was able to convince the king, Fatḥ-'Alī Shah, to exile all Sufis from Tehran.

The condemnation of the Sufis by some of the ulama has a long history, which is documented in the form of a literary genre in which they are attacked as heretics. The attacks consist of accusations that the Sufis have heretical beliefs, and refutation of those beliefs; that their practices are inconsistent with divine law; and that their leaders are guilty of scandalous actions, or lack qualifications that could justify following them. Persecution is then justified as necessary to protect the ignorant from falling victim to a kind of religious fraud. Condemnation and persecution should be distinguished. One might condemn a doctrine without condoning the persecution of those who hold it. Sometimes specific groups or individuals are condemned, and sometimes they are all lumped together. Among the Shia ulama, we find both Akhbari and Usuli scholars who have written works to refute the Sufis, (al-radd 'alá al-Sūfiyyah). One can also find expressions of condemnation of Sufis in the poetry of some of their opponents.

Along with the history of condemnations, there has also been a long history of ulama who have been attracted to Sufism; and, as with the anti-Sufis, we find treatises that stem from Sufi literary traditions authored by both Akhbari and Usuli scholars.²

The division between anti-Sufi and pro-Sufi ulama is itself highly misleading. As mentioned earlier, attitudes among the ulama may fall anywhere on a very broad spectrum. Furthermore, it is necessary to distinguish between three aspects of Sufism: theoretical, practical, and institutional. Although one occasionally finds authors who are both attached to a particular Sufi order and have training in the have zah, this is rare. As for ulama outside of any Sufi order, there is still a

¹ Pourjavady and Wilson (1978), 128-131; Algar (1969), 38.

² See Gleave (2007b), where both anti-Sufi and pro-Sufi examples of Akbari authors are given.

spectrum of views that runs from open hostility, to indifference, to sympathy. With regard to the practice of spiritual wayfaring, likewise, there are a wide variety of positions. Some are uninterested. Some approve of selected elements found in Sufi texts, e.g., remembrance of God, but condemn others, e.g., ecstatic dancing. Some are preoccupied with condemnation of all the main spiritual practices in the Sufi tradition. The same kind of diversity can be found with regard to theoretical Sufism. Some approve of the main features of the theoretical framework derived from Ibn al- 'Arabī. Some would modify it, or pose an alternative. Many would propose that a great number of doctrines associated with Sufism, such as the unity of the "perfect man" with God, are to be condemned or reinterpreted, while others, such as ideas about the microcosm and macrocosm are insightful. Some would just ignore it. Some have treatises on the theory, but have nothing to say about the practices and reject the institutions. Others find the practices useful, but reject most elements of the theory. Individuals may be found to exemplify many of the possible combinations.

As the translator has explained, there is a tradition of authors who use the term "Sufi" in a condemnatory sense associated with institutional Sufism and heretical beliefs and practices. Some of these authors use *Sirfān* in a positive sense for those aspects of theory and practice regarding spiritual journeying that they find religiously acceptable. There are other uses, as well. Some use *taṣawwuf* for the practical aspects of wayfaring and *Sirfān* for the theoretical aspects. There is little point in debating terminology.

It is a great honor for me to have been invited to write a few words for this volume, although I am completely unqualified to do so. Despite my lack of qualifications, I have gratefully accepted the invitation; but only for the sake of obtaining a blessing (tabarruk) by doing so, in the hope that the readers might remember this poor soul in their prayers.

Hajj Muhammad Legenhausen Qum 1433 AH, 2012

References

- Algar, Hamid (2011). "Baḥr-al-'Olūm." Encyclopedia Iranica, Vol. III, Fasc. 5, 504. Available online at:
 - http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bahr-al-olum-sayyed-mohammad
- —— (2006). "'Allāma Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī: Philosopher, Exegete, and Gnostic." *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 17(3): 326-351.
- —— (1995). "Ni`mat-allāhiyya." The Encyclopedia of Islam, Vol. VIII, Leiden: Brill.
- —— (1969). *Religion and State in Iran: 1785-1906*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 'Alī-lū, Nūr al-Dīn (1993, 1372 AH Solar). Sayyid Baḥr al-Ulūm: Daryā-ye bī sāḥil. Tehran: Sāzmān-i Tablīghāt Islāmī.
- Cole, Juan R.I. (2001). "Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i on the Sources of Religious Authority." In Linda S. Walbridge, ed. (2001). The Most Learned of the Shi'a: The Institution of the Marja' Taqlid. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 82-93.
- —— (1993). "Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i on the Sources of Religious Authority." Lecture delivered at Columbia University, available online at
 - http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jrcole/ahsai1.htm
- —— (1987). "Rival Empires of Trade and Imami Shiism in Eastern Arabia, 1300-1800." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 19, no. 2, 177-203.
- —— (1985). "Shi'i Clerics in Iraq and Iran 1722–1780: The Akhbari-Usuli Controversy Reconsidered." *Iranian Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1, 3–34.
- Gleave, Robert (2007a). Scripturalist Islam: The History and Doctrines of the Akhbāri Shi i School. Leiden: Brill.
- —— (2007b). "Scripturalist Sufism and Scripturalist Anti-Sufism: Theology and Mysticism amongst the Shi'i Akhbariyya." In Ayman Shihadeh, ed. (2007). Sufism and Theology. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 158-176.
- —— ed. (2005). *Religion and Society in Qajar Iran*. London: Routledge. —— (2000). *Inevitable Doubt*. Leiden: Brill.
- Heern, Zackery M. (2011). Usuli Shi'ism: The Emergence of an Islamic Reform Movement in Early Modern Iraq and Iran. Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Utah.
- Lewisohn, Leonard (1998). "An Introduction to the History of Modern Persian Sufism, Part I: The Ni^cmatullāhī Order: Persecution,

- Revival and Schism." Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, vol. 61, no. 3, 437-464.
- Litvak, Meir (1998). Shi`i Scholars of Nineteenth-Century Iraq: the 'ulama' of Najaf and Karbala'. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Moreen, Vera B. (1999). "A Shīʿīi-Jewish 'Debate' (munāẓara) in the Eighteenth Century." The Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. 119, no. 4.
- Newmann, Andrew W. (2006). Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire. London and New York: I. B. Tauris.
- —— (2005). "Anti-Akhbāri Sentiments Among The Qajar "Ulanā? The Case of Muḥammad Bāqir al-Khwānsārī (d. 1313/1895)." In Gleave, ed. (2005), 155-173.
- Pazouki, Shahram (2003). "Hazrat Sultan 'Ali Shah Gonabadi: The Renewer of the Nematollahi Order in Iran." In Celebrating a Sufi Master: A Collection of Works on the Occasion of the Second International Symposium on Shah Nematollah Vali. Leiden: University of Leiden, 69-83.
- Pourjavady, Nasrollah and Peter Lamborn Wilson (1978). Kings of Love: The History and Poetry of the Ni'matullähī Sufi Order of Iran. Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy.

Translator's Introduction

About the Book

This book consists of a compact treatise on spiritual journeying attributed to one of the distinguished masters of Islamic mysticism, Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (d. 1797), accompanied by annotations by Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī (d. 1995), who revived this treatise with meticulous edition, recension and annotation. The treatise is indeed a handbook of spirituality and a practical manual for those who wish to purify their souls, actualize the immense potentialities of their spirits, and free themselves from the captivating attachments of everyday life. It provides step-by-step instructions and guidelines on how to overcome the obstacles on the spiritual path, how to build one's relation with the Absolute (God), and how to experience the beautiful lights of spiritual ecstasy and bliss in one's heart.

What makes this treatise stand out as a unique work is that its content is very practical, it has a fluent language that is understandable for anyone, and it is backed by the verses of the Quran and authentic narrations that are agreed upon by all Muslims—not to mention its brevity and concision. The spiritual implications and inferences that the author makes from the Quran and the Islamic traditions are truly elegant and subtle.

The extensive annotations of Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī (the editor¹) serve to provide further clarification and elaboration on this concise treatise. The editor has performed a very complete research on the narrations quoted in the text, accompanied by source citation. His annotations also address the theoretical aspects of what is discussed in the treatise, and sometimes alternative ways for the spiritual practices suggested by the author. The only drawback to these annotations is that the reader is sometimes referred to the notes on multiple occasions on a single page. However, this does not mean that the reader should go back and forth between the text and the notes, which could be quite frustrating. The text stands independent of the notes, and therefore one can read a whole section or chapter

¹ What is really meant is editor and commentator.

and then read its annotations. It is for this reason that the annotations have been separated from the text and presented only afterwards—not to mention that sometimes the notes are longer than the text itself!

Although the author and the editor were both prominent scholars of Shia history, the book is not based on Shia texts in particular. In fact, the book defines and equates true Shiism with real Sufism, and shows how sectarian conflicts have no place when it comes to spirituality, which is the root of religion. The Shia Imāms whose narrations are widely cited by the author and the editor do not belong to the Shias alone, but are respected and regarded as pious scholars by their Sunni brothers. If any Muslim is to choose a spiritual guide and master, he would not hesitate to choose the Prophet Muḥammad and his Household (Ahl al-Bayt).

Here are a few points concerning this translation:

- In addition to their English translations, the original texts of the Quranic verses, narrations and poems have been provided throughout the book for those who are interested.
- The translations of the Quranic verses are made by the translator, though he has especially benefited from the translations of Arberry and Pickthall.
- \clubsuit The verses of the Quran are followed by their numbers in brackets, where the first number is the chapter number ($s\bar{u}rah$) and the second one is the verse number ($\bar{a}yah$).
- Many of the honorific titles and phrases of praise have been dropped or abridged in the translation in order to make the work more coherent and accessible to a Western reader.
- Although the citations have been mainly provided by the editor, the editions and page numbers have been researched by the translator. The same holds for the cross-references to other parts of the treatise or the annotations.
- There were a few cases where the quoted narrations had to be modified slightly in order to match the cited sources.
- The Other than the above points, there are only a few annotations added by the translator, which have been marked by [tr] in order to distinguish them from those of the editor.
- ★ There are very few poems and anecdotes that do not have a reference as no notable alternative source was found for them.
- In addition to the general index at the end, the book includes an index of Quranic verses, a thorough bibliography, and a set of informative notes on the prominent figures mentioned in the book.

Since ^cAllāmah Baḥr al-^cUlūm is introduced by the editor in his introduction, what follows below is a short biography of the editor, followed by a few points concerning Sufism and spirituality.

About the Editor

Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī was born in a family of religious scholars in Tehran in 1926 CE. He pursued both religious and modern education until 1945 when he migrated to Qum for advanced religious studies. He studied there for seven years, followed by another seven years of studies in Najaf. Among his teachers were 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥujjat, Āyatullāh Burūjirdī, Shaykh Ḥusayn al-Ḥillī, Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim Khū'ī, and Shaykh Āqā Buzurg Ṭihrānī.

In addition to his mastery of the transmitted disciplines like Islamic jurisprudence and hadith (tradition), he was well-grounded in the rational sciences such as Islamic philosophy and theoretical mysticism (*Sirfān*). However, what makes him stand out the most is his school of spirituality, which combines the heart and the intellect, and settles for nothing less than the Absolute—that is, annihilation in the Essence of God. One can still feel the underlying light that permeates in his works.

In spiritual journeying and wayfaring, he was a student of 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Shaykh 'Abbās Qūchānī, Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Gulpāyigānī, Shaykh Muḥammad Jawād Anṣārī, and most important of all, Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād, whom the editor found to be a man of unique spiritual station. Indeed, the instructions and mastership of Ḥaddād eventually made another Ḥaddād out of the editor.

In 1958, Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī returned to Iran to head the Qā³im Mosque in Tehran. In his twenty-three years of stay in Tehran, he actively sought social and political reform in order to bring about an Islamic government and society. Shortly after the Islamic revolution, he moved to Mashhad in 1980, and dedicated himself to teaching and writing. He felt that with the people's revolution and the establishment of the Islamic Republic, it was now the duty of the scholars to teach the people about real Islam, and to purify their beliefs and practices from that which is not genuine. Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī passed away in Mashhad in 1995.

He authored over fifty volumes on a variety of Islamic sciences with a mystical approach. Among these are a series of multi-volume books on the following topics: "Allahology" (3 vols.), "Imāmology"

(18 vols.), "Eschatology" (10 vols.), and "Quranology" (4 vols.). Many of his works have become sources of reference for scholars and academics.

For a more detailed study of the life and works of Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī in English, see the translator's introduction to Kernel of the Kernel, which is another work by the Āyatullāh on spiritual journeying and wayfaring, translated into English by Mohammad H. Faghfoory. The same book has also been translated into English by Sayyid 'Alī Qulī Qarā'ī as Kernels of Kernels.¹ There are two other books by him rendered into English, titled Shining Sun: In Memory of 'Allamah Tabataba'i and Divine Flashes of Ḥusayn: Sermons and Sayings of the Grandson of Prophet Muḥammad

000

Since this treatise is on spiritual journeying from an Islamic point of view, it is classified as a Sufi title. For this reason, it is appropriate to briefly discuss a few points that might have caused some ambiguity and misunderstanding concerning Sufism and the spiritual path.

Sufism and Irfan

Tasswwuf (Sufism) and *Sirfan* (mysticism, gnosticism) refer to the spiritual and esoteric aspects of Islam, both theoretical and practical. Though these two terms have different root meanings, what they signify is identical. Just like anything that is esoteric, profound and multilayered, Sufism has always faced various challenges and much opposition by dogmatists and religious scholars of the outward law. Likewise, Sufis have often been subject to false allegations, misrepresentation and excommunication due to their apparently innovational

Note that The original Persian and an Arabic translation of the current work are available at http://www.maarefslam.com and http://www.motaghin.com. Also, a previous English translation of this work by Sayyid 'Alī Qulī Qarā'ī was partly published in al-Tawhid Islamic Journal (vol. 14, nos. 3 and 4) and is available at http://www.al-islam.org/al-tawhid/sayrsuluk. However, that is only one-sixth of the entire book and it only covers the editor's introduction and Chapter One.

¹ Published in al-Tawhid Islamic Journal (vol. 13, no. 4, and vol. 14, nos. 1 and 2); available at http://www.al-islam.org/altawhid/lubb_al_lubab.

thoughts and practices. This makes complete sense, for an esoteric belief or practice is by nature something that cannot be openly broadcasted to the public on a large scale; neither can it be grasped and digested properly by the common mind.

Sufism started—though not with this name—in the first century after the death of Prophet Muḥammad (7th century CE) as a voluntary and individual movement by certain Muslims who were critical of the worldly obsessions, extravagance and inclinations of the Muslims in general, and of the rulers of the time in particular. The noble values to which the Prophet and his Companions had been so committed had been replaced by an ever increasing disposition to worldly affairs, material achievements, and self-indulgence. This called for a return to those pristine values. While the majority of people may be excused for following the current flow without questioning its authenticit—as the inherent nature of the majority dictates—an alert individual is by no means justified in being a follower. Instead, such a person must start with one's self and embark on the path of self-combat (mujāhadah).

O believers, attend to your own souls. One who goes astray hurts you not once you are rightly guided... (5:105)

O people! Do not feel dismayed on the path of guidance by the small number of its followers, for indeed the people have gathered around a table-spread whose satiation is short-lived but whose starvation is long-lasting...¹

As history has witnessed, the initial sincerity, commitment and momentum of the followers of any new movement are bound to dissipate into entropy. The early Muslims were no exception to this, and the same fate befell Sufism when it emerged as a collective school of thought and practice in the centuries that followed. The movement that was designed to break habits ended up as a set of habits itself, thereby defeating its purpose. The original Sufi disincli-

¹ Imām ^cAlī ibn Abī Tālib, Nahj al-balāghah, Sermon 201.

nation toward social renown and popularity itself became a means of attracting followers and devotees.

The emergence and propagation of Sufi orders among the Muslims—which have continued to this day—have been accompanied from time to time by certain opportunists who have exploited the name of Sufism as a means to make a living or gain social power. Such deviations and misuses—which are clearly at odds with the noble instructions of the prominent Sufi masters—have always provided the pretext for dismissing Sufism as an innovated school that had no roots in the Quran and the Sunnah (the Prophetic tradition). The ignorance of the exoteric scholars about the advanced teachings and the particular practices of the Sufis has only added to such misunderstandings and misrepresentations of this noble approach to Islam.

Their approach to me was based on their view; Of my secrets within, no one had a clue.¹

Sufism in a Nutshell

Now, what is Sufism all about? What is its central theme and message? The central theme of Sufism is that the best path to the truth and ma 'rifah' (gnosis, spiritual knowledge) is not through reading books, formal education, and the mental accumulation of thoughts and ideas. Such practices—though helpful at certain stages and laudable in their place—leave one with a myriad of thoughts and illusions, disperse one's focus and attention, and keep one engaged at the level of the discursive—even doubtful—mind. Instead, the path to truth and gnosis is to purify one's inner self and polish the mirror of the heart so that it may reflect the light of truth—which is already more than evident throughout the universe.

The most perfect man was unschooled my darling?

¹ Rūmī, Mathnawī, vol. 1, line 6.

So how can perfection Be a matter of schooling?¹

Therefore, the path to real knowledge is action, for true knowledge is not what is found in the mind, but what sits in the heart. This process of self-purification (tazkiyah) involves directing all of one's attention and inner powers to one's goal (the Beloved) by relinquishing the soul from anything that distracts it from complete focus on its journey and destination. The best way to achieve this freedom and then advance toward the destination is love ('ishq).

The author refers to the destination of the spiritual path in many places in this treatise, and defines it as the emergence of the springs of wisdom from one's heart to one's tongue, based on a Prophetic narration. In more general terms, the destination of the wayfarer on the spiritual path is to go beyond all existential limits. What troubles a wayfarer the most is limitation and particularity. The spiritual journey is the struggle of a delimited droplet of water to join the ocean and immolate its identity therein. This is a matter of consciousness, whereby one realizes the all-encompassing presence of the Truth with all of one's being:



That which *is,* is only One; Other than Him there is no one;

He is One, the only One; There is no god except the One.²

This is what is meant by annihilation $(fan\bar{a})$, where one is fully attentive of and completely absorbed by the presence of the Absolute, such that he does not see or feel himself—his delimited being and determined entity—anymore. This also clarifies what is meant by love in the context of spirituality. Love here should not be mixed with corporeal love between two human beings, although there are similarities between the two. What is different between the two is that spiritual love is not something emotional, sentimental or romantic. It is an inner drive and inclination toward the Truth, arising from an intense feeling of need, thirst and deficiency. What is similar be-

¹ The poem refers to the Prophet Muḥammad, who was unschooled. It is quoted from and unknown poet in 'Āmilī, al-Kashkūl, 1:238.

² Hātif Işfahānī, tarjī band.

tween the two is the element of sacrifice: The lover sacrifices him-self—that is, his sense of ownership of himself, and his planning for himself—for the sake of his beloved. Love helps one to pass beyond one's self, and to revolve only around one's beloved. In this sense, love, servitude ("ubūdiyyah") and guardianship (wilāyah") are close to and synonymous with one another, and their common theme is exactly the essence of Sufism.

Sufism and Shiism

One can classify Shia scholars into three general groups in terms of their view of Sufism:

- There are those who recognize Sufism as the mystical dimension of Islam, and usually have Sufi tendencies in their thought and practice.
- There are those who are against 'irfan and Sufism altogether;
 often against philosophy as well. They view that these fields
 do not truly belong to the Islamic tradition, but they were introduced from without.
- 3. There are those who distinguish between *'irfan* (mysticism, gnosis) and *taṣawwuf* (Sufism), associating a positive connotation with the former and a negative one with the latter.

A large number of prominent Shia scholars and jurists throughout history have been among the first group. To mention only a few great scholars who were Sufis themselves, one can name Sayyid 'Alī ibn Ṭāwūs, Shaykh Bahā'ī, Ibn Fahd al-Ḥillī, Sayyid Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (the author), Muḥammad Taqī Majlisī, and the first and second Shahīds. These great scholars who had reached the heart of Islam had realized that Shiism and Sufism are one in essence. Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī and Muḥammad Taqī Majlisī each have an entire treatise dedicated to showing this identification. ¹

The second group of scholars consists of those who have particularly dedicated themselves to Islamic law and the transmitted sciences. They assume that the exoteric meaning of the Quran and the narrations is all there is to them—at least in terms of what is accessible to other than the Fourteen Infallibles. Unfortunately, their objections are the second sciences and the second sciences.

¹ See Jāmi al-asrār wa manba al-anwār by Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī, and Tashwīq al-sālikīn by Muḥammad Taqī Majlisī. Also see Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, Maṭla i anwār, 5:37-39.

tions to Sufism and spirituality are often due to false assumptions and lack of familiarity, sometimes due to the wrong beliefs or actions of certain Sufis, and sometimes as a way of putting their rivals down in order to retain their social and political status. Notwithstanding this, the Holy Quran is more than direct and explicit in speaking about deeply mystical concepts such as God's unity, the unity of being, and the reality of existence.¹

The third group, which comprises most contemporary Shia scholars, can be thought of as a middle ground between the first two. However, the distinctions they make between *'irfān* and Sufism is a matter of definition more than anything else. That is, to them, Sufism by definition is a deviation from the Quran and the Sunnah. It is an inward and spiritual school of thought and practice that has been invented and introduced by men, or at best taken out of context and balance, as opposed to *'irfān*, which is genuinely Islamic and kept within the bounds of the shariah (Islamic law). This can be clearly seen in the descriptions of the current treatise in al-Dharī'ah and A 'yān al-Shī'ah, as presented below in the Editor's Introduction. Of course, such a definition of Sufism already involves a judgment of it, and renders Sufism utterly undefendable.

This is the mainstream view of contemporary Shias, both scholars and laymen, who rarely ever use the words "Sufi" or "Sufism" in a positive context. In Arabic and Persian, "Irfān and sayr wa sulūk are often held in high esteem, while taṣawwuf is repudiated. Likewise, among English-speaking Shias, mysticism, gnosticism and spirituality are usually admired, whereas Sufism is taboo. It is for the same reason that the terms "Sufi" and "Sufism" have not been used in the translation of this treatise—just to avoid the prevalent bias. Yet, it is important to realize that this distinction between "Irfān and Sufism emerged only after the eighteenth century (eleventh century AH) due to certain social and political issues.

It has been common among Shī^cite religious scholars since the Safavid period to refer to Islamic esotericism more often as *'irfan* than as *taṣawwuf*. This is due to historical reasons connected with the fact that the Safavids were at first a Sufi order and later gained political power, with the result that many worldly men sought to put on the garb of Sufism in order to

¹ Just to have cited a few examples, see verses 2:115, 8:17, 8:24, 22:62, 24:25, 24:35, 28:88, 31:30, 50:16, 55:26-27, 57:3-4, 59:4, and 112:1-4.

gain political or social power, therefore discrediting Sufism in the eyes of the devout.

Sufism appeals to the public because of its spiritual nature, its mysterious elements, and its miraculous acts (karāmāt). This popularity and attention has been the source of much exploitation and misuse, as mentioned above. Another reason for distinguishing between Sufism and *Irfān* was the emergence of many Sufi orders as social institutions with specific customs and outward appearances that provided a sense of exclusiveness, identity and belonging for their members more than anything else. It should also be mentioned that most Sufi orders have been associated with Sunni Islam. This has naturally placed the Shia minority on the defensive against Sufism. Finally, some extreme Sufi practices that are clearly contrary to the shariah, and the apparently heretical statements of certain Sufis, have called for a distinction between the straight Sufis (called mystics) and the deviants (so-called Sufis).

Though the above considerations and events are true, they do not mean that Sufism is something alien to Shiism. Sufi orders with their exclusive views and practices have ever been present among the most prominent Shia scholars—those who are most committed to genuine Islamic beliefs and the rulings of the shariah. The editor himself was a student of Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād and ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾi, who were the disciples of Sayyid ʿAlī Qāḍī, who was a pupil of Sayyid Aḥmad Karbalāʾi, who was a student of Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī. This chain of great scholars is nothing but a Sufi order in essence.

Moreover, one should realize that many of the clear-cut distinctions between Sunni and Shia Islam that exist today did not exist prior to the sixteenth century (tenth century AH). Therefore, it is inaccurate to apply today's standards to those mystics and Sufis who used to live under a different social setting. Moreover, one should be very careful about one's definitions when it comes to these discussions: The best way to learn about Sufism—and its approach to the shariah—is to have a first-hand exposure to it by referring to the pillars of this field, such as al-Ghazzālī, Rūmī, Ibn al-ʿArabī and others.

In short, among the three views listed above concerning Sufism, the first one is the most accurate and defensible, because it is corroborated by historical evidence and how Sufis themselves have de-

¹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr's annotation on Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Shi'ite Islam, p. 106.

fined and presented Sufism. The distinctions and concerns that are sometimes made can be explained by drawing on socio-political factors rather than what Sufism intrinsically is.

Sufism and Hadith

Another clarification to be made concerns the idea that Sufi beliefs and practices are not obtained from the Islamic tradition. Not only that, but that they often go against the Quran and hadith. In this treatise, the author shows exactly the opposite: Not only do these beliefs and practices comply with the Islamic tradition, but they are actually extracted from the Quran and hadith. Concepts such as the lesser and greater struggle (jihād), the base soul (nafs) and spiritual love, as well as practices such as silence, hunger and solitude, are all based on the verses of the Quran and narrations that are unanimously agreed upon by all Muslims and reported in the major books of hadith. This treatise clearly shows that Sufism is not an illegitimate child that has been attributed to Islam. Instead, it has grown, evolved and nurtured on the Islamic tradition. Of course, one should realize that faith, Ouran and hadith involve different levels and layers, and not everyone is at the same level-an important point emphasized by the author. This leads to two important conclusions: 1. One should not impose one's level upon others who have a different share of faith. 2. One should be very cautious with charging others with heresy and estrangement.

When you hear the speech
Of the mystics so strong,
Don't rush my friend,
To conclude that it's wrong;
For sometimes it happens
That you are what is wrong!

A word of caution should also be made concerning certain narrations that explicitly disavow Sufism and philosophy.² These narrations that are attributed to the Shia Imāms are nowhere to be found in the books of tradition compiled before the eighteenth century

¹ Ḥāfiz, ghazal 22.

² Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī, Mustadrak al-wasā'il, 11:380, 12:323.

(eleventh century AH). That is exactly when the opposition of the jurists against Sufism had gained heat in Persia, and fabrication of these narrations was part of the process. Of course, many of the objections made to Sufis in these narrations are valid, for they explicitly concern certain acts by some extremist Sufis. However, two things should be clarified: 1. The ascription of these words to the Imāms is wrong. 2. It is logically invalid to dismiss an entire group altogether due to the misdeeds and deviations of only a few of them.

The same holds for the Sufis who fabricated some narrations in support of their gnostic views. Indeed, many of the narrations—especially many sacred traditions (al-aḥādīh al-qudsiyyah)—that are often quoted in mystical writings are found nowhere in the books of hadith, unless quoted from a Sufi source. But again, the contents of these narrations are otherwise acceptable and verified by reason and the Islamic tradition; the only problem is their ascription to God or the Infallibles. Other than these narrations, there are more than enough Quranic verses and reliable traditions that establish the mystical dimensions and teachings of Islam.

The Need for a Sheikh

The necessity to have a spiritual master (shaykh or sheikh) is based on two essential traits of the spiritual journey: 1. The path of spirituality is a hidden one and involves many aspects that are unknown to a beginner. 2. The spiritual journey is a personal endeavor that should be customized to each traveler based on the inward and outward conditions of that person as a unique individual.² These considerations call for an insightful expert to guide the traveler to what suits his spiritual growth at that state or station. This is very similar to the Shia argument for the need for an Imām, and the insufficiency of the Quran alone as a source of guidance. It can also be worded as follows: The written texts of the Quran and the Sunnah

¹ cAlī Naqī Munzawī, The eldest son of the late Āqā Buzurg Ṭihrānī, has provided a scholarly and historical examination of the book Ḥadīqat al-Shī cah where these narrations have first appeared. See his note on Āqā Buzurg al-Tihrānī, al-Dharī cah 6:386.

² This is what distinguishes between the spiritual path (*tariqah*) and the apparent or exoteric path (shariah). Literally, both *tariqah* and shariah mean "path," but the former is an individual path while the latter is a common collective one.

are indeed sufficient guidelines for all Muslims, but they should be interpreted and adopted correctly to particular everyday circumstances, by someone who has fully realized them in himself. This further shows that Sufism is completely in line with Shiism, especially when it comes to a concept like wilāyah (guardianship, sainthood).

For this reason, just as there is a need for a qualified jurist (called a *mujtalid*) to extract the rulings of the shariah regardless of their spiritual dimensions, there is a need for a spiritual master (called a sheikh) to extract the rulings of the shariah with regard to their spiritual dimensions. It suffices for the former to be an expert in outward law, while the latter should also be an expert in inward law.

The emphasis on the need to have unconditional obedience to one's master is also based on the master's advantage in knowledge over the traveler. The master sees what the traveler does not, and therefore the latter cannot judge the former based on his limited knowledge. This is especially evident given that the traveler should choose a master in the first place because he recognizes him as a qualified instructor. This leaves one with no choice but to submit to the master—to the extent of one's certainty of the master's qualifications. When a great prophet like Moses was in need of a chosen servant of God (Khiḍr) as a teacher (18:60-82), others should think twice before deciding that they are needless of outside help in their spiritual quest.

The story of Moses and the chosen servant of God also shows that a spiritual master stands above the apparent rulings and injunctions of religion. A spiritual master is not subject to the outward rulings of the shariah, but the shariah is subject to the master. This is because a true spiritual master is one who has annihilated his will and soul in the will and soul of the Source of shariah. The speech of such a person is God's speech, and the action of such a person is God's action, as testified by the Quran and the narrations.²

¹ This is of course an intricate Quranic story, and by no means does it implicate the absolute superiority of Khiḍr to Moses in every aspect.

² See 4:80, 8:17, 9:59, 9:62, 9:74, 18:79-82, 48:10; Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:352 and 4:577; Bukhārī, Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 7:190; Muttaqī al-Hindī, Kanz al-ummāl, 1:229; Ghazzālī, Iḥyā 'ulūmal-dīn, 14:61.

A thousand subtleties, finer than a hair. Are here to be said, but they have been shrunk;

The bearers of secrets are who and where? Not everyone who shaves his head is a monk.1

مصلحت نیست که از برده برون افتد راز ورنه در مجلس رندان خبری نیست که نیست

It is not proper For the secrets to be revealed:

Otherwise there's no news That's missing from their field.2

مدح تو حیف است با زندانیان گویم اندر مجمع روحانیان بیش از این باخلق گفتن روی نیست مجر را گنجایی اندر جوی نیست چون سخن دروصف این حالت رسید هم قلم بشکست و هم کاغذ درید

The prisoners of this world bear not your praise; The angels would know the meaning of this phrase.

> I can't say more concerning this theme; An ocean fits not in a narrow stream.

The speech has got to that point of the script, Where the pen is split and the paper is ripped.³

Such a master has the same authority as the Prophet or the Imams. This kind of complete submission is due to a master at that level of spiritual perfection (the station of annihilation). Otherwise, total submission to people of lower stations would be something inexcusable and against reason. The higher one's standing on the ladder of spiritual perfection, the more others should show obedience to that person. The general rule in submission is that one should be accountable to God on the Day of Judgment for one's

¹ Hafiz, ghazal 177.

² Hafiz, ghazal 73.

³ Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, vol. 5, line 7; vol. 1, line 3825; and vol. 5, line 4198.

submission, and the only excuse that is accepted there is knowledge and certainty. Thus, one should follow what one has found to be true and certain. The following verse should be set as foundation for one's quest for truth:

Follow not that of which thou hast no knowledge. Truly the hearing, the sight, the heart—all of them shall be questioned of. (17:36)

This should clarify the case of certain Sufi practices, austerities, invocations, and acts of worship that are not exactly found in the Quran and the Sunnah. These instructions can be accepted as long as they do not directly and evidently contravene the necessary principles of religion—and of course, they only apply to the specific persons and conditions for which they are prescribed. It logically follows that if having an Imām or master is necessary, so are the customs that he establishes and the orders that he makes.

These Sufi injunctions are no different in principle than the legal injunctions that are unanimously considered Islamic and rooted in the Quran and the Sunnah. Indeed, many of the legal rulings and the details of the shariah are not explicitly found in the Quran and the Sunnah, but are deduced by a jurist following rigorous methodological principles.

An important point to realize is that the mere absence of a belief or practice from the Islamic tradition does not mean that it is alien to it. In other words, there are two types of innovation: one that is deduced from within, and one that is introduced from without. The Quran and the Sunnah have paved the way and made provisions for what is called a "good custom" (al-sunnat al-ḥasanah). There is a famous narration that the Prophet Muḥammad said:

Whoever establishes a good custom, for him will be its reward and the reward of anyone who acts upon it until the Day of Resurrection, without any reduction from their rewards.¹

This is in fact a Quranic principle, expressed in a slightly different way as follows:

Whoso intercedeth a good intercession shall receive a share of it, and whoso intercedeth a bad intercession shall receive the like of it... (4:85)²

This is an example of the famous narration that says,

It is upon us [the Infallibles] to cast on you the roots, and it is upon you to derive the branches.³

In other words, when it comes to specific steps in the spiritual journey, the Quran and the Sunnah provide the general framework and foundation from which the particular instructions should be deduced, based on an expert's mastery of the religion, of the spiritual path and of its destination.

Furthermore, some Sufi doctrines and practices cannot be broadcasted on a large scale. If they were to be openly and explicitly spoken about by religious leaders and in scriptures—which are models and sources for *everyone*, regardless of their capacity—then it would mean that these values and practices should be adopted throughout the entire population. However, their propagation and adoption on a large scale would involve the collapse of social institutions and the order of life that God has decreed for mankind according to His

¹ Kulaynī, al-Kāfi, 5:9-10. Also see Ṣadūq, al-Hidāyah, p. 59 and al-Khiṣāl, 1:240 and 1:323; Mufid, al-Ikhtiṣāṣ, p. 251. For Sunni sources, see Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 3:87; Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 4:359; Nasāʾī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī, 5:76-77.

² Also see 2:93 and 57:27, where God shows a lenient, even approving view toward certain prescriptions and proscriptions that were not direct revelation. Another story to reflect upon is Abraham's sacrifice of his innocent child due to a dream, as recounted in 37:101-107.

³ Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, Wasāʾl al-Shīʿah, 27:62, reported from Imām Riḍā.

wisdom. Not that their widespread acceptance is undesirable, but it is impossible by their very nature and in the way this world is set up. The purpose of treatises like this is also not to advertise Sufism to everyone, which is not possible and thus not desirable. They are rather intended for two groups: 1. those who are curious to know more about these topics; and 2. thirsty souls who have already been awakened and are striving for spiritual growth.

How to find a qualified spiritual guide?

When one reads this treatise and similar manuals on spirituality, one cannot but notice the centrality and significance of the sheikh in the spiritual journey. Thus, a devout aspirant of the truth would earnestly ask, "Where and how can I find such a master?" This is a particular issue that stems from the universal directive that it is necessary to have a spiritual master. The seekers of spirituality are sometimes disillusioned when they realize their lack of access to a reliable master—which is rare both in the East and the West, perhaps more so in the West—whom they can trust wholeheartedly. But there are a few points to note in this regard:

The spiritual journey is an inner quest. It is a matter of struggling and combating one's soul, in order to overcome the illusion of one's self and ego. It follows, then, that guidance in this journey is inner guidance. This is exactly what defines a spiritual master: one who has control and authority over the heart; one who rules over the kingdom of the spirit. This is one of the meanings of al-wilāyah altakwīniyyah (cosmic or existential authority). The manipulation of the wayfarer's heart and giving direction to one's inclinations and desires are exactly what a spiritual master does, and this is precisely why a wayfarer needs a guide.

It does not take much to realize that this control and direction of the sheikh is only a degree and level of God's direction. It is a manifestation of God's guidance, which descends through a perfect man who can receive and transmit that divine guidance. God is the only Ruler of the hearts and the Guide of the believers; others are only the means and instruments of His guidance:

God is the Guardian of the believers; He bringeth them forth from darkness into light... (2:257)

Thus, even if the saints and prophets die, one shall have no fear, for God is ever alive:

Rather, God is your Master, and He is the best of helpers. (3:150)

And trust in the All-Living One Who dieth not... (25:58)

Shall God not suffice His servant?... (39:36)

... Thy Lord sufficeth as a guide and helper. (25:31)

...Know that God is your Master—an excellent Master and an excellent Helper! (8:40)

In fact, sometimes God cuts off His servant from the means and instruments, so that the servant would turn to Him wholeheartedly, and not become engrossed in the intermediaries.

He makes your surroundings bitter and grim, So that you would return to Him.¹

It is only when one breaks away from everyone other than God, and cuts off one's hope from everyone other than Him, that one will feel God's encompassing mercy and presence, and will benefit from His companionship.

¹ Rūmī, Mathnawī, vol. 5, line 1524.

...And hold fast to God; He is your Master—an excellent Master and an excellent Helper! (22:78)

O Support of one who has no support; O Backing of one who has no backing; O Helper of one who has no helper.¹

O Lover of one who has no lover; O Healer of one who has no healer; O Answerer of one who has no answerer; O Sympathizer of one who has no sympathizer; O Comrade of one who has no comrade; O Succorer of one who has no succorer; O Guide of one who has no guide; O Intimate Friend of one who has no intimate friend; O Compassionate upon whom no one has compassion; O Companion of one who has no companion.²

O Supporter of one who asks for His support; O Mentor of one who asks for his mentorship; O Helper of one who asks for His help.³

O Sufficer of one who asks for His sufficiency; O Guide of one who asks for His guidance; O Guardian of one who asks for His guardianship.⁴

فَفِرُوا إِلَى اللهِ...

Therefore, flee unto God... (51:50)

¹ Duca al-Jawshan al-Kabir, part 28.

² Ibid., part 59.

³ Ibid., part 30.

⁴ *Ibid.*, part 60.

As Rūmī says, "When we have a hundred, we also have ninety." Of course, sometimes a wayfarer has a limited capacity to receive spiritual blessings and diffusions. This might require the person to be physically present in a sacred place or with a master. Otherwise, the saints and vicegerents of God are not limited in their diffusions by time and space, just as God is beyond these limits.

God's justice and mercy require that spiritual guidance and progress should be available to anyone who seeks it with sincerity. If the physical location and temporal position of a person—which are beyond one's will and control—were to prevent one from reaching one's perfection, then that would be against God's justice. That would be against God's promise which He has repeatedly emphasized in the Quran.² Anything that is said concerning the need for a spiritual master should not go against this principle of God's justice.

True, God's blessings and guidance come through means and intermediaries, according to His custom and tradition, but it is *He* who sets and provides the means. It is God who gives guidance, and it is also God who makes the means and instruments of His guidance. All a servant is asked to do is to observe one's duty and to struggle in His cause:

As for those who struggle in Our cause, We surely guide them in Our paths. And truly God is with the good-doers indeed. (29:69)

...And whosoever keepeth his duty to God, He will appoint for him a way out @ And He will provide for him from whence he reckoneth not. And whosoever putteth his trust in God, He shall suffice him. Truly God attaineth his purpose. Truly God hath appointed a measure for everything. (65:2-3)

¹ Rūmī, *Matlınawī*, vol. 1, line 1114.

² See 2:38, 2:256-257, 3:101, 4:66-69, 4:100, 4:175, 5:16, 8:29, 10:9, 13:27, 16:9, 19:76, 20:123, 22:23-24, 22:54, 24:25, 29:69, 42:13, 47:4-5, 47:17, 64:11, 65:2-3, 76:3, 90:10, 92:12.

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

If this spiritual provision and guidance is to reach someone through some sort of means and instruments, then God will bring about those means and instruments. This is how God led His righteous servant Moses to "accidentally" come across Prophet Shuʿayb (Jethro) on one occasion and benefit from his company for ten years, and then meet and accompany a chosen servant of God (Khiḍr) in another occasion.

What troubles the novice traveler many a time is that the means of God's guidance are often hidden, unknown, and unidentifiable. However, one should realize that God's means and instruments are not limited to the physical and outward instruments to which one is accustomed. He is not limited to certain means and not others.

...Nay, but His two hands are outspread; He bestoweth as He will... (5:64)

Based on the above, the necessary and sufficient conditions for reaching the Truth can be summarized into two things: 1. To actively seek the Truth, which is the result of feeling an inner need and thirst. 2. To have sincerity in this quest, which is something that one has to decide between one's self and the Truth. Kāshifi has explained this beautifully:

If a seeker of the Truth is sincere in his search, then either his sincere search will bring him to a perfect master, or his pure devotion causes the master to come to him.

If you are graced By a feeling of thirst,

Or if you are moved By an inner search and quest,

That will drag you

To a sheikh on your breast,

Or the sheikh will come, Rushing to your nest.1

Thus, the need for a spiritual guide should not be interpreted as the need for physically attending the presence of a master, for even those who apparently have no master are guided by a sheikh from within:

Rarely it happens that travelers alone Complete this journey all on their own;

But even then there is the masters' support, Their help is there though they are unknown.

The master reaches the absent with his hand; For his hand follows Allah's command.²

The above also clarifies the criterion and standard for choosing the right master or the right school of spirituality: It is one that satisfies one's inner need and quenches one's inner thirst. This is exactly the same standard that one should follow in choosing between all available religions and ideologies: One should purify one's inner self and then look into these sources and see which one best responds to his inner call and meets his inner need. The ultimate judge in these decisions is one's reason and conscience, and one should always see oneself accountable to the truth.

The spiritual awakening

How does the initial awakening occur? What leads one to break away from the dominant heedlessness that prevails over the people as they grow up? How does one start to feel frustrated with the pointless course of everyday life, and begin to see that the relentless quest of ordinary people for worldly objectives is nothing but illusion? This sense of wakefulness and the preceding state of heedless-

Mulla Ḥusayn Kashifi's comment on Rumi, Lubb-i lubāb-i Mathnawi, p. 152.

² Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, vol. 1, lines 2987-2988.

ness cannot be truly grasped except after that inner reform and awakening occurs.

"The initiation of the awakening process is an act of grace. You cannot make it happen nor can you prepare yourself for it or accumulate credit toward it." What this means is that it is very difficult to give a formula for it, for its means and causes are intricate, unknown, and beyond the control of the person. It is a matter of feeling a pain, need and thirst from within. The need and deficiency is already there, but it is a matter of coming to *feel* and *sense* it. This is hardly communicable by words and concepts, just as no pain or taste can be adequately expressed in words. It can only be found and felt from within. Spiritual awakening involves doubting and questioning one's old patterns and values, and doubting is not an *active voluntary choice*. Instead, one is *overtaken* by doubt. It is a process whereby the seemingly obvious norms, values and lifestyles fall flat on their face in one's eyes.

Perhaps one thing that could potentially lead one into realizing this need and deficiency is contemplation. What is meant here is to reflect upon fundamental questions and the most important mysteries and subjects, such as: the reality of one's self, the meaning of life, the purpose of creation, what is existence, where one has come from, where one is going to, and the most important and effective of all: death. The heedlessness of people is precisely because of their indifference to these questions and not taking them seriously. Death is perhaps the most certain reality for everyone, an enigma that cannot be fully resolved, and a key to breaking away from the norms and values that have enchained the people of this world. As one ponders upon death more and more, he starts to realize its truth and certainty with all of his being. Such a person will no longer be satisfied with anything limited, and will realize the futility of this world and its affairs, desires and engagements. Studying about the saints and friends of God who overcame their base souls, advanced to higher perfections, and actualized their potentialities can also lead one to an inner realization, and inspire zeal in one toward spirituality and the higher realms.



It is appropriate to close the above review of Sufism and spiritual journeying by quoting an elegant anecdote about the author, Sayyid

¹ Tolle, A New Earth, p. 259.

Muḥammad Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, narrated by the editor, Āyatullāh Husaynī Ṭihrānī:

During the summers, the late Baḥr al-culum used to lead the Sunset and Night Prayers (maghrib and ishā) in the Mosque of Kūfah, a congregational prayer attended by many of the religious scholars and students of Najaf, who would then return to Najaf after the prayers. People of every class and occupation used to join his congregation, to the extent that if someone got to the Mosque late he would find no place to sit.

The custodian of the Mosque was a very pure and simple man who had a sincere devotion and a great affection for the Sayyid. Every day, he would prepare a waterpipe with utmost devotion for the Sayyid before he came. When the Sayyid would come, he would bring it over to his prayer mat, sit there, and zealously enjoy watching the Sayyid smoke. The Sayyid would also greet, chat and even joke with him until prayer time. For this reason, the Sayyid used to come to the Mosque approximately half an hour earlier, so that the congregational prayer may not be delayed.

One day it so happened that the Sayyid got there late, when it was already time for the Sunset Prayer, and the crowd was waiting for him. There was no time to sit, smoke, and chat with the custodian. Having realized this, the custodian himself—though disappointed—put away the waterpipe and even avoided meeting the Sayyid so as to not take his time.

When the Sayyid saw that the custodian did not show up, he sent someone after him. When the custodian came, the Sayyid said, "Where is your waterpipe?" He replied, "I saw you were late and there was no time to smoke, so I thought it was not appropriate to bring it tonight." The Sayyid said, "Go bring it! I will not perform the prayer unless I have a smoke."

The custodian, who was not anticipating this, rushed to his room excitedly and brought the waterpipe which he had prepared like always for the Sayyid. The Sayyid asked him to sit there with him. Baḥr al-'Ulūm started smoking the waterpipe and chatting and humoring with the custodian like always, completely relaxed and taking his time without any rush. It was as if nothing had happened, and there was no crowd [from every class of people, including prominent scholars] waiting for him to begin the congregational prayer. Once he

finished smoking, and made sure that the poor custodian was completely conciliated and cheerful, the Sayyid stood up and performed the prayer.

After narrating this story, Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī added, "This is the act and conduct of one who has embraced the spirit and reality of religious rites, and has reached the core and essence of the shariah."

A real *karāmah* (lit. nobility) is not to perform miraculous acts such as walking on the air or the water, which even some insects can do. Rather, it is to manifest the perfections that only a human being can attain. Therefore, *karāmah* is to have a noble and graceful soul, as seen in the anecdote above.

Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm was not like the people of this world—looking for every excuse to postpone the prayer and indulge in carnal pleasures. He was not even an ordinary scholar. He was among a handful of individuals that have certainly met Imām Mahdī, as it has been repeatedly reported. It is not conceivable that he would put off conversing with his Lord—especially when such a large crowd was waiting for him—unless there was a more important consideration at stake: the heart of a sincere servant of God that was on the verge of being shattered. The story above is an example of true *ijtihād* by one who has connected to the spirit of religion. It is also an example of how a saint or a perfect man is not bound by the strictly outward aspects of the shariah. Of course, a perfect man never deviates from the shariah in reality, but he may deviate from *our impression* of the shariah, since we are ignorant of what it truly is.

This incident is quite evocative of certain accounts narrated from the Prophet Muḥammad:

I. Once, as he was walking toward the mosque for prayer, the children of Medina circled around him and begged him to play with them: "Be my camel, be my camel!" they cried. The Prophet humbly accepted their "invitation," even though the Companions were waiting for him in the mosque. Seeing the Prophet's delay, Bilāl came looking for him, only to find him

Narrated by Ayatullah Husayni Tihrani's son (Sayyid Muḥammad Muḥsin) in his annotations on Husayni Tihrani, Maṭla-i anwar, 3:191-192.

playing very affectionately with the children. As Bilāl wanted to relinquish the Prophet from their hold, the Prophet stopped him and said, "It is better to me to delay the prayer than to upset these kids." So he asked Bilāl to go to his house and bring something for the children in exchange for the Prophet. Bilāl found some walnuts in the Prophet's house and brought them to him. The Prophet held out his hand and told the children, "Would you sell your camel for these walnuts?"

Having made sure of their satisfaction, the Prophet headed for the mosque, and he said, "May God have mercy on my brother Joseph: He was sold for a handful of dirhams and I was sold for a handful of walnuts."¹

They sold their camel for a walnut or a meal; Alas! Alas! They lost their deal.²

- II. Sometimes the Muslims brought their newborns to the Prophet, asking him to name the baby or to bless it by a supplication. The Prophet would hold the baby in his lap out of respect for its family, but sometimes the baby would urinate on him. When this used to happen, the people around would cry out in sorrow and regret, but the Prophet would tell them, "Do not distrurb the newborn. Let the baby urinate in peace." Thus, he would patiently wait for the baby to finish, and then he would pray for it or choose a name as they had requested, making sure that the baby's family is completely delighted and satisfied. They could not detect any sign of irritation or resentment in the Prophet because of the baby's urination. Then he would wash his clothes after they left.³
- III. Once an ignorant Bedouin came to the Prophet's Mosque in Medina and recklessly started urinating in a corner of the Mosque. The Companions were outraged by this, and were about to rush at him in an aggressive manner with rebuke and chastisement. But the Prophet told them not to stop his urina-

¹ 'Awfi, Jawāmi ' al-ḥikāyāt, p. 30; Jalālī Shāhrūdī, Majmū 'at al-akhbār, p. 286.

² Narāqī, *Tāqdīs*, pp. 89-90 and 97-98.

³ Al-Ḥasan ibn al-Faḍl Ṭabrisī, Makārim al-akhlāq, p. 25.

tion: "Teach him! Be lenient and take it easy. Do not be harsh or rigid." According to some accounts, he told them, "You are to make things easier, not more difficult," or, "Bring people closer; do not repel them." Then he called for a bucket of water to be poured on the spot. Later on, when the Bedouin was taught and had learnt about his act, he said, "The Prophet approached me—may my parents be sacrificed for him—without swearing, rebuking or shoving, and told me, 'This mosque is not a place to urinate. It is only a place to remember God and perform prayer.'"

This is the truth that I hold and speak: In ethics and manners, our beloved is unique.²

Truly thou [O Muḥammad] art of a magnificent character. (68:4)

It is by a mercy of God that thou [O Muḥammad] art lenient to them... (3:159)

Indeed there hath come unto you a messenger, (one) of yourselves; grievous to him is your suffering; anxious is he over you; he is clement and compassionate to the believers. (9:128)

At the end, the nondescript translator is most grateful to God for enabling him to complete this work of translation and research. He is also grateful to the means by which God provided His grace: all the individuals who helped, supported, and contributed to this

² Hāfiz, ghazal 156.

¹ Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 2:503; Ibn Mājah, Sunan Ibn Mājah, 1:176; Shāfiʿi, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs, al-Umm, 1:69; Abū Dāwūd, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, 1:94; Ṭūsī, al-Khilāf, 1:494; Ghazzālī, Iḥyāʿ ʿulūm al-dīn, 7:140.

work, including Shaykh Ahmed Haneef who carefully reviewed the manuscript and provided excellent comments on it, Hajj Muhammad Legenhausen who provided comments on the manuscript and wrote a very informative foreword, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Kazi Publications, ISKSS Institute in Mashhad and Maktab-e Vahy Institute in Qum. Of course, the translator alone—and none of the abovementioned individuals—is responsible for any errors or mistakes in this work. May God accept this effort, forgive its mistakes and shortcomings, and pardon the translator and his parents.

That Abode of the Hereafter, We assign it unto those who desire not any ascendancy in the earth, nor any corruption; and the good end is for the self-restrained. (28:83)

TAWUS RAJA

Editor's Introduction

In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate May peace and mercy be upon our master Muḥammad and his pure progeny.

And may all their enemies be far from God's mercy.

The correctness of this copy of the manuscript in terms of spelling and structure

When I, the nondescript editor, was studying at the sacred seminary (hawzah) of Qum, I came across a hand-written treatise titled, "The Treasure of the Kings (Tulfat al-mulūk): In Spiritual Journeying and Wayfaring; attributed to our master Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm." The manuscript was a property of the late Ḥujjat al-Islām Shaykh ʿAbbās Ṭihrānī. Since I found the treatise very interesting, I borrowed it from him for transcription, and that is how I got my first copy of the treatise in 1366 AH (1947 CE). However, that version of the manuscript had many mistakes, such that in many places the meaning was not clear. I therefore began looking for a better version of the manuscript to correct my copy. When I migrated to Najaf to continue my studies, I found a copy of the treatise in the possession of Āyatullāh Shaykh ʿAbbās Hātif Qūchānī which I borrowed to edit my own. His copy, however, had many errors as well, and was helpful only for very few corrections.

When I returned to Iran in 1376 AH (1957 CE), I was once with my honorable teacher, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ' who told me, "I have a copy of the treatise based on a very correct version of the manuscript that I have transcribed with my own hands." He continued, "I came across a copy of the treatise when I was studying in Tabrīz, from which I made my own transcription; although that version had many mistakes. When I had the grace to go to Najaf, I found that my

¹ [tr: The late editor wrote this introduction and his annotations when ^cAllāmah Ṭabāṭabā⁷ī was still alive, and that is why he has not followed ^cAllāmah's name by phrases like "May God be pleased with him," which are usually used after one's death.]

master, the late Āyatullāh Sayyid ʿAlī Qāḍī, had a copy of the treatise that was very similar to mine. In fact, the two had been transcribed from the same original as I found out later. His copy was in a very primitive hand-writing—like that of a child that is just learning how to write—and so it had many errors. Later on, I found a very correct version of the treatise, which was written in beautiful handwriting on a paper of high quality and neatly aligned. It was the copy of my mathematics and astronomy teacher, the late Āqā Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim Khūnsārī. Thus, I borrowed his copy and transcribed it in 1354 AH (1936 CE). His copy was transcribed ninety years before that time."

I asked him ['Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī] to lend me his copy for transcription, to which he agreed with his usual kindness and nobility. What follows is my transcription of his copy, which I made with utmost precision. Therefore, the copy of the manuscript presented here is very correct and reliable.

Above was an historical overview of the manuscript and its correctness in terms of spelling and structure.

The attribution of this treatise to Bahr al-cUlum

Concerning the authenticity of this attribution, I, the nondescript editor, heard the late Āyatullāh Sayyid 'Abd al-Hādī Shīrāzī saying, "I am quite confident that this treatise—except for the last parts—is written by Baḥr al-'Ulūm."

Moreover, I heard the late Āyatullāh Āqā Buzurg Ṭihrānī—who granted this nondescript editor the permission to narrate traditions (hadith)—saying, "I also believe that this treatise—except for the last parts—is by the late Baḥr al-'Ulūm."

He has described the treatise in al-Dharīah as follows:

Treatise on Spiritual Journeying and Wayfaring: Attributed to our master Baḥr al-ʿUlūm—Sayyid Mahdī ibn Murtaḍa al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī al-Burūjirdī al-Najafī—who died in 1212 AH [1797 CE]. It is in Persian and consists of two thousand lines. Its attribution to Baḥr al-ʿUlūm is uncertain. A copy of the treatise is in Baḥr al-ʿUlūm's house in Najaf... I have also seen another version of the treatise, which has some additions and explanations, titled "The Treasure of Kings in Spiritual Journeying

and Wayfaring, by Baḥr al-ʿUlūm." The description of its Arabic translation was presented above.

His description of the Arabic translation of the treatise is:

Treatise on Spiritual Journeying and Wayfaring: An Arabic translation of the Persian treatise on spiritual journeying and wayfaring attributed to Sayyid Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, which was translated over a few nights in Najaf by Abū al-Majd Muḥammad al-Riḍā al-Iṣfahānī, on the request of Sayyid Ḥusayn ibn Muʿizz al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Qazwīnī al-Ḥillī. The translator has mentioned that Baḥr al-ʿUlūm composed the treatise in Kirmānshāh... I [i.e. Āqā Buzurg Ṭih-rānī] say: The attribution of the second half of the treatise to the late Baḥr al-ʿUlūm is uncertain, as it has a Sufi style. So even if it is proved that the treatise belongs to him, it would only be the first half of it...²

The late Sayyid Muḥsin al-Amīn al-Jabal 'Āmilī says,

Baḥr al-ʿUlūm has a Persian treatise on the gnosis of God, Exalted He is. However, the author of Tatmīm amal al-āmil has denied its ascription to him with certainty... Apparently this is the same treatise that has a Sufi tendency and does not entirely comply with Islamic law (shariah). That is why its attribution to Baḥr al-ʿUlūm has been firmly denied in Tatmīm amal al-āmil... The book talks about the necessity of visualizing the face of one's master when reciting "Thee [alone] we worship, and Thee [alone] we ask for help" (1:5). It also talks about seeking help from the planet Mercury, and quotes a quatrain in this regard.³

However, his claims about the Treatise are not true. First of all, nowhere in the Treatise does it say that one should visualize the face of his master when reciting "Thee [alone] we worship, and Thee [alone] we ask for help."

Second, the matter of seeking help from Mercury is not a part of the Treatise, as it will be discussed later on. That is part of what the transcribe wrote at the end of the Treatise, where he talks about his

¹ Āgā Buzurg al-Tihrānī, al-Dharī ah, 12:284-285.

² Ibid., 12:282.

³ Amīn 'Āmilī, A 'yān al-Shī'ah, 10:160.

own experiences and practices. It has nothing to do with Baḥr al-'Ulūm's text.

Here is the view of my teacher and master, 'Allamah Ţabāṭabā'ī:

It has been said that this Treatise belongs to Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm Khurāsānī. However, this is very unlikely. Shaykh Ismāʿīl Maḥallātī—who was a proponent of constitutional monarchy [during the Iranian constitutional revolution in the 1900s]—considered this treatise to be the work of Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, except for the parts on controlling incoming thoughts, litany and contemplation (nafy al-khawāṭir, wird and fikr) [numbers 22, 23 and 24 under Chapter Six, which discuss]. In fact, Maḥallātī's copy did not even have these parts, although it was a complete copy of the Treatise.

He also said,

It has also been said that this is a Persian translation of an Arabic treatise by the late Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs, and that the original Arabic—which is missing—was titled, "A Treatise in Spiritual Journeying and Wayfaring, by Ibn Ṭāwūs." So was the title of the copy that I got from the late Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim Khūnsārī. However, our grand master and the Sign of the Truth, the late Sayyid 'Alī Qāḍī (may God be pleased with him) was positive that the entire treatise surely belongs to the late Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-'Ulūm.

One day I told my teacher, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, "I, the lowest being, have read many books on ethics, mysticism and spiritual journeying. Yet, I have not found any book as comprehensive, organized and practical as this treatise. That is not to mention its brevity and concision, which makes one able to put it in his pocket and take it with him where ever he goes." He was surprised by my words and said, "I heard a very similar remark from the late Qāḍī (may God be pleased with him), who said, 'No mystical book is as comprehensive and refined as this one.'"

Āyatullāh 'Abbās Qūchānī, who was the appointed successor of the late Qāḍī, said, "The late Qāḍī had a particular regard for this treatise. However, he used to say time and again, 'I do not permit anyone to perform the litanies and invocations that have been mentioned in it."

Based on the following signs and evidence, one can infer that the entire treatise is by Baḥr al-ʿUlūm:

First, based on the above quote from al-Dharī'ah, the late Muḥammad Riḍā Iṣfahānī considered it to be by Baḥr al-'Ulūm, and has pointed out that it was written in Kirmānshāh. Iṣfahānī was a great jurist and theologian of the school of legal methodology (uṣūli), and the author of Wiqāyat al-adhhān and Naqd falsafah Darwīn ("Critique of Darwin's Philosophy").

Secondly, the late Qāḍī (may God be pleased with him) deemed it to be by Baḥr al-cUlūm. He was an authority in this field, a scholar who had combined the exoteric and esoteric sciences, and a master of ethics and gnosis. One cannot easily overlook the witness of such a strong pillar of knowledge in this field.

Thirdly, the argument of those who make an exception to the latter parts of the book is that they are *unlikely* to be by Baḥr al-ʿUlūm. However, it is clear that mere likelihood is not sufficient to omit a part of a book from the whole. It might have been that the Sayyid had a correct way of interpreting and practicing those very parts.

Fourthly, anyone who reads this treatise would realize that the entire treatise is a consistent text with a uniform style. It has a very unique style, an easy flow, and an eloquent composition. The writing style of the first half of the book is absolutely no different from that of the second half, and not even from that of numbers 22, 23 and 24 under Chapter Six. This shows that the Treatise has been written by a single pen from beginning to end. Of course, this does not contradict the adoption of some of the material from the previous figures of the field—as will be mentioned in our annotations—for taking and adopting ideas from previous authors has been a common practice among the scholars.

As with the claim that the Treatise belongs to Ibn Ṭāwūs (may God be pleased with him), it is very unlikely. This is because first of all, Ibn Ṭāwūs was a scholar of the seventh century (13th century CE), who resided in Ḥillah [in Iraq] and whose mother tongue was Arabic. Therefore it cannot be the case that he composed a book in Persian, especially that the Persian of this Treatise belongs to a later century. It is also evident from the style and flow of the text that it is an original composition and not a translation. Moreover, anyone who is familiar with the works of Ibn Ṭāwūs would know that his spiritual school and approach was that of self-vigilance (munāqabah), self-reckoning (muhāsabah), fasting and supplication. The kind of spiritual journeying and wayfaring presented in this treatise does not conform to that of Ibn Ṭāwūs.

Fifthly, the original manuscript of this treatise was found only in Baḥr al-ʿUlūm's library in Najaf after his death, and is currently

available and kept at his house. There is no mention of this treatise in any of the encyclopedias of scholars written before his time. Obviously it was not written after his time either, which means that it was written during his time.

Given all this, who among the jurists of that time had a mystical and spiritual disposition to write such an excellent treatise? Likewise, who among the adepts of mysticism and spirituality was so well-grounded in Islamic law, the verses of the Quran and the narrations of the Prophet's Household (Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them)?

It is evident that this Treatise has been written by a great jurist who was well-versed in the Quran and the narrations. This naturally leads us toward Baḥr al-culūm, especially when the original copy of the treatise was found in his library.

One might say, "Perhaps it was written by some other jurist of the time who was oriented toward mysticism and spirituality—such as the late Āyatullāh Muḥammad Mahdī Narāqī (may God immerse him in His mercy)—who then sent it to Baḥr al-'Ulūm." This is unlikely, however, because the works of these scholars are all known and numerated. This is especially the case with the late Narāqī. Neither has his son, the late Āyatullāh Aḥmad Narāqī, attributed such a treatise to his father.

In addition, we saw above that Sayyid Muḥsin al-Amīn—who was a man of great scholarship and research—claims that Baḥr al-Ulūm had a Persian treatise on the gnosis of God. What treatise is that? Could it be any treatise other than this one?

Therefore, one can conclude that the attribution of this treatise to the late Baḥr al-ʿUlūm is the most likely and plausible possibility, and God knows best. This is particularly supported by the fact that he was a man of inner purity and spiritual enlightenment, and had realized a fair share of divine mysteries.

A syān al-Shīsh bears witness to this:

The public has ever viewed him as someone who had a special share in the divine mysteries, and as a man of miraculous acts, spiritual graces and unveilings. There is no doubt that he was blessed with the graces of the mystics and Sufis, and this is evident from his disposition toward worship and travel [to meet the saints and mystics and ponder upon the signs of creation].¹

¹ lbid., 10:158.

At any rate, I transcribed the treatise of my teacher, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, and have been reading and benefiting from it ever since. Then at some point, I decided to write a short commentary on it in order to elucidate some of its ambiguities and extract the sources of its narrations and poems. All praise belongs to God and all gratitude is to Him, Supreme and Exalted He is, for He gave me the grace to perform this difficult task to the best of my ability. I ask the people of expertise and insight to overlook any mistakes that they may come across, and to not deprive me of their beneficial supplications while I am alive and after my death.

The life and biography of Bahr al-Ulum

The spiritual virtues of Baḥr al-ʿUlūm are far beyond my imagination and conception. The pen of this unworthy editor is incapable of describing the life of this unique and unmatched figure of excellence.

What can I say about him, when Shaykh Ja'far Kāshif al-Ghitā'— the greatest Shaykh among the jurists—used to wipe off the dust on Baḥr al-'Ulūm's shoes with the tip of his turban?

Once, Mīrzā Abū al-Qāsim Jīlānī Qummī, who was a grand scholar and an expert in the exoteric and esoteric sciences, went to visit the shrines of Iraq. There he met Baḥr al-cUlūm, whereby he asked him in front of others, "May my parents be sacrificed for you! What have you done to make you reach this degree and station!?"

What can I say about a person who is known without a doubt to have repeatedly met Imām Mahdī (may our spirits be sacrificed for him)? All the great scholars, rather everyone living in Najaf, was convinced that he used to meet the Imām. From the words of some of the scholars it can be inferred that it was always possible for him to get in touch with the Imām. What can I say about someone who was embraced in the arms of our Imām—the selfsame Imām who holds the Greatest Guardianship (al-wilāyat al-kubrā)?

Nevertheless, as a means of seeking grace and blessing, we shall take a brief look at his life. The following is the translation of the exact words of Khwānsārī in *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, who has partly quoted from Bū 'Alī, a contemporary of Baḥr al-'Ulūm:

Al-Sayyid Mahdī, son of al-Sayyid Murtaḍa, son of al-Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī al-Ḥusaynī al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī al-Najafī, is our master and our dependable pillar of strength. May God prolong his life, elevate his rank, and amplify the

blessings that diffuse from him. He is a leader the like of whom the world has never seen. Mother Nature has not given birth to such a high-soaring determined king [of knowledge] for years. He is the greatest of the great scholars, the master of erudite Muslims, and the most knowledgeable and unique figure of his time.

If he starts a discourse on the rational sciences, you would think that he is Shaykh al-Ra'īs [Ibn Sīnā], Socrates, Aristotle, or Plato. If he talks about the transmitted sciences such as Islamic law and the principles of law, you would think that he is 'Allāmah Ḥillī. If he enters a theological debate with anyone, you would swear to God that he is 'Alam al-Hudá [al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍá]. If you listen to what he has to say in exegesis of the Noble Quran, you would forget your own impression and understanding of the Book, and would think that he is the very person to whom God has revealed the Quran. He was born in the elevated city of Karbalā', on the night of a Friday [Thursday evening] in Shawwāl 1155 AH [1742 CE]. Based on the abjad system of numerology, the year of his birth corresponds to "Mahdī was born to support the truth" (linuṣrat al-haqq qad wulida al-Mahdī).

He studied under the instruction of his father for a while. Then he studied with other scholars including Shaykh Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī and 'Allāmah Āqā Muḥammad Bāqir al-Waḥīd al-Bihbahānī (may God prolong their lives). He then migrated to and settled in Najaf. His blessed house is currently a hub of scholarship and knowledge, to which the great scholars and people of erudition have recourse.

After our teacher, 'Allāmah al-Waḥīd, Baḥr al-'Ulūm is the undisputed head of all the scholars, and the leader of Iraq. The scholars of Iraq have all turned to him, choosing him as their source of help, and benefiting from his knowledge. Baḥr al-'Ulūm is like the Ka'bah of Iraq: The people and scholars travel from far and wide to meet him. He is an immense ocean for which there is no shore or boundary.

Moreover, there are many who have heard of his miraculous acts and divine graces. On one occasion, a large group of Jews converted to Islam and the sect of Shiism after seeing his miracles. The incident is so well-known and unmistakable that everyone has heard of it; it has reached many places in

the world. The dream that his father had on the night of his birth is sufficient a sign of the grandeur and excellence of this honorable man. His father was in Ḥijāz [the Arabian Peninsula] at the time, when he saw Imām Riḍā (peace be upon him)¹ in a dream. The Imām sent a candle by Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl Bazīʿ to be lit on the top of their house, whereby its light glared up to the sky to the extent that its end could not be seen.

When the eyes of someone encountering or visiting him falls upon him, that person would become awestruck and would say to himself "This is not a human being." ²

The above description of this true scholar and epitome of virtue was quoted from *Muntahá al-maqāl*. Indeed God has blessed him with a wide range of expertise. He has endowed him with a lawful magic and a pure intoxication that are essential in solving scientific problems, delivering the misguided from misguidance, and overcoming deviant scholars in debate and dialectic.

It is sufficient for his merit and honor that nowhere in the world has anyone ever been given the title, baḥr al-ʿulūm, meaning the Ocean of Knowledge, except him.³

The above was a summary of a description of this paragon of knowledge and gnosis in *Rawdāt al-jannāt*.

¹ [tr: Throughout the original text and the annotations, the names of the prophets and the Infallibles are followed by phrases such as "peace be upon him," just like other traditional Muslim writings. In the translation, however, most of these phrases have been moved into brackets, or rarely dropped altogether. Readers who find them distracting can simply skip over the brackets. Their total omission was avoided as it would have defeated the purpose of such a work on spirituality—although not everyone may realize this subtlety.]

² Abū 'Alī Ḥā'irī, Muntahá al-maqāl, 6:359-360.

³ Khwānsārī, Rawdāt al-jannāt, 7:203-204.

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYING AND WAYFARING

...Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers that preceded us in faith, and place not in our hearts any rancor toward those who believe. Our Lord, truly Thou art All-Clement, All-Compassionate. (59:10)

All praise belongs to God in the beginning and the end, and our final call is that "All praise belongeth to God, the Lord of all beings" (10:10).

Written by the sinful hands of the servant who is hopeful of his Lord, on the night of 10 Rabī^c al-Awwal 1393 AH (23 April 1973 CE).

SAYYID MUHAMMAD HUSAYN HUSAYNÎ ŢIHRĀNÎ



TREATISE ON SPIRITUAL JOURNEYING AND WAYFARING

By 'ALLAMAH BAHR AL-'ULUM

PART I

An Overview of the Spiritual Journey, its Destination, and the Realm of Sincerity





Chapter 1 The Number Forty

In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate All praise and glory be to the One Who is naught but pure Existence (ayn al-wujūd).

May peace be upon the one who stands at the station of vision $(shuh\bar{u}d)$, and upon his family, who are the trustees of the Worshipped One.²

O my fellow travelers to the kingdom of purity and felicity!
O my companions on the path of sincerity and dedication!
Wait! Truly I observe a fire on the side of Mount Tūr.
Perhaps I may bring you an ember therefrom or a firebrand that you may warm yourselves.³

The significance of the number forty in actualizing one's potentialities

There is a tradition by the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him and his family) that has been narrated in various ways:

Whoever makes [himself] sincere for God for forty days, the fountains of wisdom will emerge from his heart onto his tongue.⁴

This tradition has been narrated with different wordings but the same meaning.

We have seen with our eyes and have heard from others that this number has a special impact on the actualization of one's potentialities, the perfection of virtues, journeying through the stages (manāzil) of the spiritual path, and accomplishing elevated stations (marāḥil).⁵

The stages of the journey may be numerous, but there is a destination at each stage. There are many stations on the path, but the perfection of each is marked by forty days—that is, forty days mark the perfection of a realm.

The kneading of Adam's clay by God's hands (i.e. His power) was done in forty days:

خَمَّرْتُ طِينَةَ آدَمَ بِيدَيُّ أَرْبَعِينَ صَبَاحاً.

I kneaded Adam's clay with My two hands for forty mornings.⁶

This means that Adam completed a realm of potentialities during this period. It has been said that his body had lain between Mecca and Medina for forty years, receiving the rain of God's mercy, until it became capable of being attached to the Sacred Spirit (al-rūḥ al-qudsiyyah).

The appointed time of Moses (peace be upon him) was also completed in forty nights. Moreover, his people were delivered from wandering in wilderness after forty years.⁷

Finally, the Seal of the Prophets (peace be upon him and his family) was dressed with the robe of prophethood after forty years of servitude.

The significance of the number forty in the actualization of one's potentialities

The duration of one's journey in this world, whereby one's potentialities are actualized and a person reaches perfection is forty years. According to the narrations, a person's intellect is perfected according to his capacity at the age of forty. One keeps growing from birth to the age of thirty, then the body [more or less] remains the same for ten years, and then the journey of the corporeal world is completed at forty. That would be the beginning of one's journey to the Hereafter, whereby every day and every year is a step taken in that journey. One's strength diminishes every year, his physical powers decline, his hearing and sight become weaker, and his body withers, for the time of his journey and residence in this world concludes at forty.

This notion has been referred to in the following narration:

مَنْ بَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ وَلَرْيَأْخُذِ الْعَصَافَقَدْ عَصَى.

Whoever reaches forty and has not taken up a cane, is a sinner. 11

The cane is a symbol of traveling. It is recommended for travelers to have a cane. The completion of forty years means that it is the time to travel, and taking up a cane is interpreted as getting prepared and packing up for one's journey to the Hereafter. (Thus, whoever does not take up a cane is heedless of his imminent journey.)

Just as the body reaches its full maturity at the age of forty, so is one's success or failure determined at that age. For this reason, the narrations say that if a man has not acquired a "luminous face" [i.e. has not achieved salvation] by forty, Satan rubs his hand on that man's face and says, "May my parents be sacrificed for a face that will never be saved," and he adds, "Indeed you have been enlisted in the register of my troops." ¹³

There are also narrations saying that anyone who guides and accompanies a blind person for forty steps will surely enter Paradise. 14 The apparent meaning here concerns one who is blind in terms of sight (baṣar), but its interpretation is one who is blind in terms of insight (baṣirah). One who is blind of insight cannot actualize his potentialities unless he completes forty steps. He might come close to actualization before then, but he would go back to his original state if he is left on his own. To complete one's kindness toward him is to get him to walk forty steps, whereby he achieves his guidance. This is the action that makes Paradise certain for someone.

The four faculties of intellect, imagination, anger and appetite

There are also narrations that the neighbors of a house extend up to forty houses in four directions. ¹⁵ It is as if these houses are in the same world, and beyond that would be another realm. The four directions here are interpreted as the four faculties of intellect ('aql), imagination (wahm), appetite (shahwah) and anger (gha dab). ¹⁶ As long as one has not left behind forty stages of each of these faculties, that person is still in the realm and neighborhood of that faculty.

It is as if the neighboring stages of the divine faculty of intellect describe themselves by these words:

وَكُلُّ غَرِيبٍ لِلْغَرِيبِ نَيِيبُ

أَجَارَتُنَا إِنَّا غَرِيبَانَ هَيهُنَا

O our neighbors, We're strangers here!

But strangers to each other, Are close and near.

And the neighboring stages of the evil faculty of imagination, the bestial faculty of appetite, and the predatory faculty of anger chant together:

وَ إِنِّي مُقِيمٌ مَا أَقَامَ عَسِيبُ

أَجَارَتَنَا إِنَّ الْخُطُوبَ تُنُوبُ

O our neighbors, The problems are severe!

But as a mount stands, We shall have no fear. 17

Evidence on the impact of the number forty in the actualization of one's potentialities and the acquisition of second nature qualities

The impact of the number forty in the manifestation of one's talents, the actualization of one's aptitudes and potentialities, and the attainment of second nature qualities (sing. malakah) is explicitly stated in the Quran and the narrations, and has been experienced by the people of esoterism and spirituality. The noble narration mentioned above is also along these lines, that maintaining sincerity for forty days brings about the springs of gnosis and wisdom. There is no doubt that anyone who is fortunate and determined to actualize his potential sincerity and travel through these forty stages will have the springs of gnosis gushing forth in his heart.

These forty stages are in the realm of sincerity and dedication, and the ultimate destination of these stages is to reach a realm beyond the realm of the most sincere (*mukhlaṣīn*). That would be the realm where

أَبِيتُ عِنْدَرَبِي يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِي.

"I pass the night in the presence of my Lord—He gives me food and drink." 18

The food and drink that the Lord provides are true knowledge and infinite gnosis.

It is for the same reason that the meal of hospitality offered to the Seal of the Prophets in his ascension is said to have been milk and rice. ¹⁹ Milk is the symbol of genuine knowledge, and that is why seeing milk in a dream is interpreted as knowledge.

The narration on the emergence of wisdom from the heart onto the tongue

The emergence of wisdom from one's heart to his tongue is the result of traveling within the realm of sincerity. It is not about traveling in order to achieve sincerity, for the narration says, "Whoever makes [himself] sincere for God for forty days," which means one should have already achieved sincerity. Therefore, these stages start with sincerity. The wisdom and gnosis promised by this narration is not for anyone who merely observes a forty-day retreat, nor is it for one who has not yet achieved sincerity. To qualify for this narration, a wayfarer must have the following:²⁰

One: an overall knowledge of this journey's destination, which is the emergence of the springs of wisdom. This is a requirement because as long as one does not have any notion of some destination, he will not embark on a quest for it.

Two: entry into the realm of sincerity and learning about it [in detail].

Three: journeying through the forty stages of the realm of sincerity.

Four: completing the many realms that precede the realm of sincerity, as one cannot enter the realm of sincerity unless he has completed its preceding realms.





Chapter 2

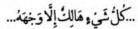
An Overall Knowledge of the Destination

A wayfarer's destination and its degrees

The aforementioned narration defines the destination of the journey as "the springs of wisdom emerging from one's heart." This is no different from the destination of the universe, which is to reach eternity—also called subsistence by God ($baq\bar{a}$). The emergence of springs of wisdom and genuine knowledge refers to the same thing, because such knowledge is the sustenance that sacred souls receive from their Lord, and God's sustenance brings about eternal life.

...They are living, and receive sustenance there with their Lord. (3:169)

Reaching this destination implies the achievement of infinite degrees of perfection, including complete immateriality (tajarrud) to the extent allowed by one's contingent potentiality (al-isti dad alimkāni). After all, materiality cannot be combined with eternity, for matter and body pertain to the realm of generation (kawn), and every generation is followed by a decay (fasād).



... Everything is perishing save His Face... (28:88)

The face of something is that with which it encounters other things, and by which it appears and manifests to others. That is, one's face means one's manifestation.

The station of manifesting the divine lights

Thus, death and destruction are not separable from anything except for the manifestations of the Divine Names and Attributes. There were many souls that advanced [in the apparent sense] and had some share of knowledge and learning, but they did not come close to having even a drop of the spring of wisdom. The spring of wisdom refers to the source of all effusions and the origin of all perfections.

Hence, one of the highest stations in the world is to manifest the divine lights, where there will be no death or destruction, as explicitly mentioned in the Quran.²

Universal encompassment of the divine realms

Among the other stations to be achieved in this journey is the universal encompassment (al-iḥāṭah al-kulliyyah) of the divine realms, to the extent allowed by one's contingent potentiality. That is because wisdom (hikmah) is a genuine knowledge that is free of every doubt and imperfection, and that cannot be achieved without a universal encompassment of the transcendent realms. The result of such encompassment is the knowledge of the past and the future, and authority over all beings. That is because the container has a complete dominance over the contained. Thus, a person at this station would be present everywhere and together with everyone—except for any limitations due to the management of the body.

All these degrees reach their perfection when one is freed from the management of the body. There are infinite other degrees and blessings in this realm, the description of which is impossible. We should now turn to the realm of sincerity and dedication.³



Chapter 3

Entering the Realm of Sincerity and Knowing about it

Two types of sincerity

There are two types sincerity:

- 1. Making one's religion and worship sincere for God, Exalted He is.
- 2. Making one's self sincere for God.

The first type has been referred to in the verse,

...To worship God, making the religion sincere for Him... (98:5)

This type of sincerity applies to the initial degrees of faith, and it is incumbent on everyone to acquire it. Any act of worship without this type of sincerity is void. It also serves as a preliminary to the second type of sincerity, which has been referred to in the verse,

إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللهِ النَّخْلَصِينَ.

Except for God's most sincere servants. (37:40, 37:74, 37:128 and 37:160)

In this verse, sincerity is the attribute of servants, as opposed to the other verse where sincerity is the attribute of religion. The first verse talks about servants who make *their religion* sincere, while the second verse talks about servants who make *themselves* sincere. Likewise, the narration, "Whoever makes [himself] sincere for God" is about the servant himself becoming sincere, which is the second type of sincerity. In the first type, the servant is called *mukhlis* as a subject (one who makes sincere and is deliberate in sincerity), but in the second type, the servant is called *mukhlas* as an object (one who is made sincere, in character; i.e. chosen).

This second type of sincerity is an elevated station, beyond the stations of submission (*islām*) and faith (*īnān*). A true monotheist is one who has reached this station, which cannot be reached except by the grace of God. As long as a wayfarer has not entered this realm of sincerity, he is not freed from associating other things with God (*shirk*):

...And most of them believe not in God except that they associate partners with Him. (12:106)

The characteristics of mukhla sin: the people of essential sincerity

According to the explicit text of the Book of God, there are three stations for those who reach the degree of essential sincerity (mukhlaṣīn).¹

One: they are exempt from being summoned for accounts and outward reckoning² on the Day of Judgment:

...So they will be surely summoned & Except for God's most sincere servants. (37:127-128)

They have already experienced self-reckoning as they have passed through their inner resurrection—which is the greatest resurrection. That is why they need no further reckoning.

Two: the reward and felicity of each person will reflect the actions of that person, except for this group. The divine grace and blessings that they receive are far beyond what the intellect can imagine and far above any remuneration for their actions:

And you are not requited save what you were doing & Except for God's most sincere servants. (37:39-40)

Three: it befits them alone to glorify God, and they are the only ones who are capable of praising Him as He deserves:

Glorified be God from that which they describe [of Him] & Except for God's most sincere servants. (37:159-160)

It means that they can know the All-Mighty and describe God the way He deserves. This is the highest degree for a created being (makhlūq) and the ultimate station that a contingent being (mumkin) can achieve. It is truly the most magnificent of stations and the noblest of positions. A servant cannot sip this drink unless the springs of wisdom emerge from his heart by the command of God, Blessed He is. One cannot reach this degree unless he passes all the degrees of the contingent realm, and opens his eyes to the kingdom of necessity and divinity.

Indeed as long as one has not cut through the kingdom of contingence (*imkān*), he cannot don the attire of eternal life, and cannot step into the field of those who are "with their Lord" ('*inda Rabbihim*). The most sincere servants of God (*mukhlaṣīn*) are present with their Lord and receive an eternal sustenance:

Count not those who were slain in God's way as dead, but they are living, and receive provision there with their Lord. (3:169)

The provision that they receive is that very provision of the *mukhlaṣīn*, described as "a known provision":

أُولَيْكَ لَمُمْرِزِقُ مَعْلُومٌ.

For them there is a known provision.4 (37:41)

That is, being slain in the way of God refers to the selfsame degree of sincerity, and thus the two provisions mentioned in the verses above are identical. Furthermore, they are with their Lord, which signifies their nearness to God. This is the reality of guardianship and sainthood (wilāyah), which is the source and root of the tree of prophethood (nubuwwah):

أَنَاوَعَلِيُّ مِن شَجَرَةٍ وَاحِلَةٍ.

I and 'Alī are from the same tree.⁵

Prophethood stems from guardianship and is born therefrom. In fact, guardianship is the light and prophethood is its reflection; guardianship is the face and prophethood is its image; guardianship is the essence and prophethood is its trace. It was the walī (friend of God, guardian, saint) who was first commanded to "Come forth" (aqbil), and then it was the nabī (prophet) who was told to "Step back" (adbir).⁶ This is why prophethood is not possible without guardianship, but guardianship is possible without prophethood.⁷

The following Prophetic narrations are also best interpreted as descriptions of the *mukhlaṣīn*:

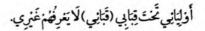
There is nothing blocking them from looking at their Lord except His Robe of Grandeur.⁸

I saw my Lord, the Majestic and All-Mighty, while there was no veil between me and Him, except for a veil of white sapphire in a green garden.⁹

These two narrations refer to the same type of veil, although not all veils are the same. They involve truly good tidings for the mukhlaṣīn that they will have the grace of being the neighbors of the Master of the messengers. That is a realm above the realm of the closest angels to God, because when the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) asked Gabriel, "Have you seen your Lord?" Gabriel replied,

There are seventy veils of light between me and Him. Should I approach one of them, I will surely burn. 11

One cannot do justice to the *mukhlaṣīn* in describing their lofty ranks, because words fall short of such descriptions and the minds of people cannot comprehend it. The All-Mighty God said,



My friends are under My tents [or domes]; no one knows them other than Me. 12

That is, "No one knows their realm and their stations other than Me."

As mentioned above, reaching this realm hinges upon being slain in the way of God. Hence, as long as a servant has not been killed on this path, he does not enter the realm of sincerity. Being killed means to cut the attachment of one's spirit from the body, and then to cut the attachment of one's "spirit of spirit" from the spirit [voluntarily]. It is very similar to death, which is the [involuntary] detachment of the spirit from the body.

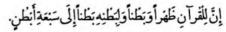
Two types of being slain in God's way

The cutting of attachments can be in two ways: either by an outward sword, or by an inward one. The one being killed is the same in both types, but the killers are different. In the first type, the killers are the troops of Satan and infidelity, while in the second type the killers are the troops of mercy and faith. Either way, what is cut and killed are the elements and constituents of the corporeal world. However, the ones who cut these attachments in the first type are worthy of blame and punishment, while the ones who cut them in the second type are blessed and rewarded. That is because:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَاتِ.

Acts are only by intentions. 15

Being killed in God's way by the outward sword is a lower instance and manifestation of being killed in His way by the inward sword, which is in turn a lower instance and manifestation of being killed by the inner inward sword, the description of which shall come. Therefore, wherever the Quran talks about being slain in the way of God, the outward meaning is to be killed by an outward sword. The inward meaning is to be killed by the inward sword, and the most inner meaning—which is another layer of the verse—is to be killed by the inner inward sword.



Truly the Quran has an inner dimension, and its inner dimension has an inner dimension, and so on it goes up to seven inner dimensions.¹⁶

The stages and conditions of struggle (jihad)

It is for the same reason that the Quran refers to both types of being killed in God's way as jihad (struggle, combat) [because one is the inward interpretation of the other]. For example, the two types of jihad have been referred to in the following verses:

Go forth, light and heavy, and struggle in God's way with your wealth and your selves... (9:41)

As for those who struggle in Our cause, We surely guide them in Our paths... (29:69)

And the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) said,

We have returned from the lesser struggle to the greater struggle.¹⁷

The smaller or lesser type of something is a sample or example of the greater type of that thing. Hence, the conditions and characteristics of struggle apply to both types of jihad, not only one.

Being outwardly killed is a result of the lesser jihad, which in turn is subsequent to migration (hijrah) toward and with the Messenger. Migration itself hinges upon embracing faith (īmān), and that is subsequent to submission (islām). These four steps in this order [i.e. islām, īmān, hijrah and jihād] are the conditions that one should achieve in order to be outwardly killed in the way of God. Similarly, being killed by the inward sword is a result of the greater jihad, which in turn is subsequent to [inward] migration toward and with the Messenger. This migration again is a result of embracing faith [inwardly], which is subsequent to [inward] submission.

One cannot go far spiritually and achieve elevated stations on the path without going through these major stages. The Book of God says,

Those who believe, and have emigrated, and have struggled in the way of God with their wealth and their selves are of much greater rank to God; and it is they who are the triumphant Their Lord gives them good tidings of mercy from Him and pleasure, and for them are gardens wherein is lasting bliss There they will be forever; truly with God is a magnificent reward. (9:20-22)

The stages of the lesser struggle

The first stage is submission (islām), which means to verbally declare the two testimonies of faith (shahādatayn, i.e. one's belief in the unity of God and the messengership of Prophet Muḥammad). This is what separates a Muslim from an infidel [i.e. a non-Muslim]. The second stage is faith (īmān), 18 which consists of actually believing in the two testimonies. This is what distinguishes a believer from a hypocrite. A hypocrite is one whose outward appearance and presentation in the public differs from what he holds within and how he behaves in private.

A yardstick to distinguish a believer from a hypocrite

If one's heart is not enlightened by the content of what one says, then that person is a hypocrite, not a believer. Not believing in what one says has certain signs and indications that others can observe. Declaring the two testimonies of faith means that one believes in a single object of worship, and confirms everything that the Prophet brought (kullu mā jā'a bihi al-Rasūl). The outward sign of this is to not worship anyone except the One God, and to abide by everything that the Prophet ordained. Hence, anyone who worships another god would be a hypocrite.

This other god is sometimes one's lusts and desires:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ الْحَنْدَ إِلْهَهُ هَوَاهُ...

Hast thou seen him who hath taken his desire to be his god?... (45:23)

Sometimes it is Satan:

Did I not make a covenant with you, O Children of Adam, that you shall not worship Satan?... (36:60)

Clearly this verse does not concern those who consider Satan as their creator, for we have not heard of anyone with this belief. Rather, it is about those who *follow* the Devil. Thus, whoever abides by Satan has actually taken him as his god.

Others may have other gods such as their greed for wealth, power and money. If one follows any of these things in a way that does not please God, he has taken it as his object of worship [in place of God].¹⁹

Similarly, one would be a hypocrite if he does not abide by what the Prophet ordained, unless he has a legitimate excuse such as error or forgetfulness:

Discern the denial of the hypocrites and the disbelievers through their vile actions.²⁰

Such a person might undertake migration (hijrah) and struggle (jihād), but neither is he migrating toward the Messenger, nor is he struggling in the way of God:

Whoever migrated toward God and His Messenger, then his migration is toward God and His Messenger, and whoever migrated to reach a woman or acquire some spoils, then his migration is toward that.²¹

Since the lesser struggle is an instance of the greater struggle, we can deduce that the same classification also exists with respect to the greater struggle. That is, there can be hypocrisy on all these levels.

The first two stages of both struggles are the same: submission and faith. At these two stages, the lesser and greater struggles differ only in terms of certain grades and degrees, which will be discussed later on. In both types of struggle what separates a believer from a hypocrite is faith. A hypocrite in either type of struggle can be known by his lack of compliance with what he claims to believe in.

The level of faith that is required for the greater struggle is higher than the level of faith that is required for the lesser struggle, as we shall discuss later on. Thus, it is more vital for those involved in the greater struggle to abide by the implications of the two testimonies that they declare. The slightest deviation from the implications of either testimony suffices for one's hypocrisy.

This is why the spiritual masters do not consider anyone who violates the outward rules of the shariah (Islamic law) by the slightest bit as a true wayfarer on God's path. Rather, they consider such a person to be a liar and a hypocrite. This is in accordance with the following narration:

We deem any humility of the body that is beyond the humility of the heart as hypocrisy.²²

Historically, the hypocrites in the lesser struggle were those who migrated along with the Prophet because they feared his political power, or in order to acquire spoils or some object of their love, as opposed to migrating in the way of God and for His sake. Outwardly they were fighting the enemy on the battlefield, but inwardly they were pursuing their desires or protecting themselves politically.

Similarly, the hypocrites in the greater struggle are those whose struggle is not in order to make their intellectual faculty dominate their physical faculties. Neither is it to weaken the fury of their physical faculties so as to free themselves in the way of God and for His sake.

In the lesser struggle, the hypocrites apparently uttered the two testimonies of faith, migrated with the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family), and fought the infidels. However, their hypocrisy was known through certain traits and actions that indicated their lack of faith. Were they to explicitly express their disbelief they would have been considered infidels.

Similarly, the hypocrites in the greater struggle may apparently look like the wayfarers on the way of God. They might keep their heads down, take deep breaths, wear coarse woolen clothes, take forty-day retreats, abstain from eating animal products, engage in austerities, make hidden and apparent invocations at all times, utter the words of true mystics, and make up deceiving speeches—but that is only an appearance:

When thou seest them, their bodies please thee... (63:4)

There are clear indications from their actions and behavior that do not conform to those of sincere believers. It clearly shows that they do not embrace the implications of faith, more so than the hypocrites in the lesser struggle.

Hence, if you see anyone who claims to be a wayfarer on the spiritual path but who is not pious, self-restrained and compliant with the requirements of faith, then consider him a hypocrite. That is so even if one deviates from the straight path of the shariah by a hair's breadth, except for that which is due to a legitimate excuse such as error or forgetfulness.

As the second struggle is a greater struggle compared to the first, so are its hypocrites greater hypocrites. Thus, the traits and descriptions that the Book of God mentions about the hypocrites apply to these hypocrites to the utmost degree:

...On that day they were nearer to disbelief than faith, saying with their mouths that which was not in their hearts; and God knows best what they hide. (3:167)

...So beware of them. May God kill them! How they are perverted. (63:4)

Truly the hypocrites are in the lowest pit of the Fire; and thou wilt not find any helper for them. (4:145)

Some of these hypocrites call themselves people of spiritual combat and struggle while they look down on the rulings of the shariah.

They consider these rules suitable only for the masses. They even view the scholars of Islamic law to be inferior to them. They invent some activities and affairs of their own as the path toward God, and think that the way to God is something beyond that of the shariah. They are truly examples of these verses:

...They want to separate between God and His messengers, and say, "We believe in some and disbelieve in some [others]," and want to adopt a way in between @ Truly they are the disbelievers; and for the disbelievers We have prepared a humiliating punishment. (4:150-151)

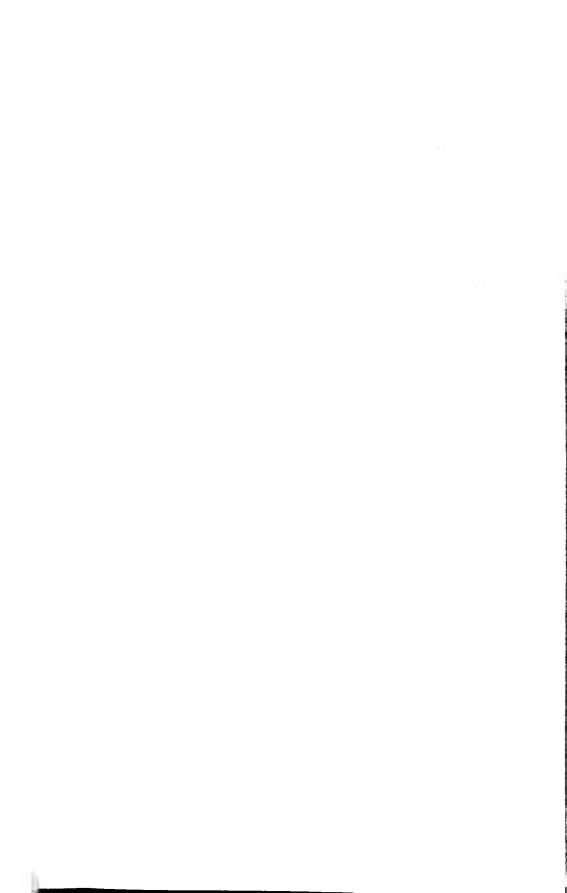
And when it is said to them, "Come to what God has sent down, and to the Messenger," thou seest the hypocrites turn from thee with aversion. (4:61)

...They said, "Shall a [mere] human being guide us?" So they disbelieved... (64:6)

They perform prayer and fast but not out of earnestness and zeal; they perform acts of worship but not with sincere intentions; and they engage in the remembrance of God but not on a consistent and continuous basis. They are as God has described:

Indeed the hypocrites seek to trick God, but it is He Who is tricking them. When they stand up to pray they stand up without earnestness, showing off to the people and not remembering God but little Wavering in between, [belonging] neither to these nor to those... (4:142-143)

Therefore you should be careful not to be deceived merely by their outward worships and invocations.





Chapter 4

Traveling through the Forty Stages of the Realm of Sincerity

The forty stages of the realm of sincerity

What is meant by traveling the forty stages of this realm is to actualize one's potentialities and reach the level of complete sincerity in-act. The actualization of potentialities can be illustrated by the burning of wood, coal, or something with the potential to turn into fire. As a piece of wood or coal is placed near fire, its temperature starts to increase. Thus, its potentiality of becoming fire approaches actuality more and more, until at some point this potentiality is actualized, whereby the dark wood or coal ignites and becomes inflamed. However, this is only the beginning of actualization, not a complete actualization. That is, the quality of being wood or coal is still hidden within that light and fire. If the object is taken away from the fire, or even if there is a gentle wind, that would be sufficient for the object to return to its initial state and lose this apparent actualization. Therefore, the quality of being fire is only an accidental quality at the beginning (accidental in the logical sense, 'araḍi).

Should the proximity of this piece of coal or wood to the fire extend for a longer period, it will eventually lose all of its properties of being coal or wood, and its potential for becoming fire will be fully actualized. Hence, every part of it becomes fire, and it would be impossible for it to become a piece of coal or wood once again. No wind can take it back, and the object remains in the form of fire until it is totally burnt and turned into ash.

It is not sufficient to merely enter the realm of sincerity

Thus, the apparent actualizations that one experiences when he advances from an inferior realm to a superior one are not sufficient for a struggler on the path of religion and a wayfarer who wants to complete the stages of sincerity. That is because the properties of the inferior realm are still present and hidden in his being. Such a person is not of the same caliber as the purified souls of the superior realm and therefore he cannot access the effusions of divine grace and the spiritual degrees that they enjoy. Not only that, but if he lags behind or makes the slightest slip in his journey and struggle, or if some barrier blocks him from the path even for a short period of time, he will fall back to the inferior realm.

...وَنُرَدُّ عَلَى أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَانَا اللهُ...

...Shall we be turned back on our heels after that God hath guided us?... (6:71)

The light of faith was outwardly manifested on most of the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) as long as they were physically close to him. However, they were not yet fully cleared of the remnants of the Age of Ignorance and infidelity which were hidden within them. Thus, the moment they were separated from the Prophet, the influences of their true natures took over, and the light of faith that they outwardly exhibited was extinguished by the fierce winds of jealousy, animosity and love for wealth and power.

Muḥammad is naught but a messenger; there were [other] messengers who passed before him. Will it be that, if he dieth or is slain, you will turn back on your heels?... (3:144)

This is exactly why abstaining only from the apparent and outward sins is not sufficient for one's deliverance. Rather, one should also abstain from the hidden and inward sins:

وَذَرُوا ظَاهِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُ...

Forsake the outward sin and the inward... (6:120)

The realms that one goes through in his ascent or descent are in a sequence, like day and night, or like the hours of a day. As long as

the preliminaries are not completed in their turn and the potentialities of a realm are not actualized, one cannot reach the following realm.¹ Even if there is an iota remaining from a preceding realm, one would be incapable of entering the next.²

Thus, merely entering the realm of sincerity is not sufficient for the full achievement of sincerity. In addition to the mere entry, one should actualize and manifest every degree of this realm. It is only then that the person would be freed from the remnants and impurities of the inferior realm. As a result of this ascent, the light of sincerity would illuminate every corner of his heart, all traces of his being would be totally annihilated, and he would step into the domain of proximity, where "I pass the night with my Lord." That would be the initial stage of the springs of wisdom, which cannot be achieved unless one has mastered sincerity and has actualized it to the fullest. To achieve the full actualization and mastership of any realm, one should be in that realm for at least forty days, as we discussed above. Hence, as long as a wayfarer has not journeyed for forty days in the realm of sincerity and has not actualized its forty stages, he would not be able to go any further.

The realms that precede the realm of sincerity

The Book of God has mentioned the realms before the realm of sincerity in brief. There are four such realms, the first of which is the realm of submission (*islām*), and the three realms after that are indicated in this verse:³

Those who believed and have migrated and have struggled... (9:20)

A brief description of the realms that precede the realm of sincerity

First: submission (islām), as Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) said,

...إِنَّ الْإِسْلَامَ قَبْلَ الْإِيمَان...

...Truly Islam is prior to faith (*īmān*)...4

Islam in this sense is what separates a Muslim from an infidel (non-Muslim), and is that which is shared between a believer and a

hypocrite.

Second: belief or faith (*imān*), by which a believer is distinguished from a hypocrite. It is common among all believers, and includes the two layers of the outward religious law (shariah) and the spiritual path (*tarīqah*).

Third: migration (hijrah) with the Prophet, which distinguishes between a wayfarer and a worshipper, between a struggler and one who sits aside, and between the tarīqah and the sharī ah (shariah).⁵

Fourth: struggle (jihād) in the way of God.

Hence, every struggler is also a migrant, a believer and a Muslim; every migrant is also a believer and a Muslim; and every believer is also a Muslim—but not the other way around.

There are many narrations along these lines, saying that Islam does not embrace faith, but faith embraces Islam. For example:

Faith to Islam is like the Holy Kabah to the *haram* (the Sacred Precinct that surrounds Mecca). One can be in the *haram* without being in the Kabah, but one cannot be in the Kabah without being in the *haram*⁶

The following verse also refers to this idea:

Most of them [people] believe not in God except that they associate partners with Him. (12:106)

Migration with the Messenger and struggle in the way of God refer to inward migration and inward struggle, which are called the greater migration and the greater struggle.

As with the lesser migration and the lesser struggle, they fall under the second realm, which is the realm of faith. At a time when one cannot perform the lesser migration, it should be substituted and replaced by migrating away from sinners and the people of this world, both inwardly and outwardly. Likewise, the lesser struggle is replaced by commanding what is good and forbidding what is evil.⁷

A wayfarer that wants to embark on the greater migration and the greater struggle should have already achieved the greater Islam and the greater faith. The greater struggle has been commanded in the verse,

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ...

Struggle for God, a struggle that He deserves... (22:78)

After completing the greater Islam and the greater faith, the aspiring wayfarer should make a firm intention to launch into the realms of migration and struggle. This should be done in the company of the inner messenger as well as the outer messenger or his successor. The wayfarer should complete these two realms in order to reach the honor and triumph of "being slain in the way of God."

By completing the above realms, one will be relieved and liberated from the many dangers, numerous obstacles, and countless bandits and deceivers on the path. But my friend, you should be very alert from there on! The completion of these realms and being slain in God's way is only the beginning of a huge danger and an immense difficulty.

That is because the valleys of the greatest infidelity and the greatest hypocrisy are situated right after that. There resides the greatest Satan, which is the head of all devils. The other devils (the other "Satans") are in fact his troops, subsidiaries, helpers and followers. Thus, do not think that you have escaped danger because of having passed the above realms. You have not yet acquired the cherished jewel that is the goal of the journey. So beware, because such a thought is an illusion and deception.

There are four further realms that one should complete in order to reach the desired destination of the spiritual journey:

First: the greatest submission (al-islām al-a -zam).

Second: the greatest faith (al-īmān al-a czam).

Third: the greatest migration (al-hijrat al- 'uzma').

Fourth: the greatest struggle (al-jihād al-a czam).

The completion of these realms will bring about the realm of sincerity. May God bless us with it.

A detailed description of the realms that precede the realm of sincerity

Based on the above, a traveler should journey through twelve realms—the number of the zodiacal constellations, the months of the year, the hours of the day and the night, the princes of the Children of Israel, and the successors of Muḥammad (peace be upon him and his family). The people of insight would of course realize the secret about this number. The twelve realms are in the following order:

1. The lesser submission (al-islām al-aşghar)

It is to verbally declare and affirm the two testimonies of faith (shahādatayn, i.e. one's belief in the unity of God and the messengership of Muḥammad), and to physically perform the five [practical] pillars of Islam.⁸

The lesser submission has been referred to in this verse:

The Bedouins say, "We have embraced faith." Say, "You have not embraced faith; rather, say, 'We have embraced Islam,' for the faith has not yet entered into your hearts..." (49:14)9

It has also been referred to in the following narrations:

Islam is that by which one's blood is spared, one's trust is to be returned, and one can marry a Muslim. But the reward [in the Hereafter] is for faith. 10

Islam is what the people apparently hold: testifying that there is no god but God and Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger, performing the prayer, paying the alms, performing the pilgrimage to the House, and fasting in the month of Ramaḍān.¹¹

2. The lesser faith (al-īmān al-asghar)

The lesser faith is to accept and confirm the above inwardly and with the heart. 12

The lesser faith requires believing everything that the Prophet ordained, including what he said concerning moral traits, righteous deeds, the benefits and harms of actions, as well as his assignment of successors and his delegation of missionaries. This is because accepting the messengership of the Prophet involves accepting the truth of everything that he brought.

This type of faith has been mentioned in a narration where Samā^cat ibn Mihrān asks Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) whether Islam and faith are different or not. The Imām replies:

Islam is to testify that there is no god but God and to affirm the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family). It is that by which one's blood is spared, and upon which [the laws of] inheritance and marriage are based. It is what the masses apparently and outwardly hold. However, faith is the guidance and that which is established in one's heart and manifests in his actions as a result of his Islam... ¹³

3. The greater submission (al-islam al-akbar)

This is the level after the lesser faith, and has been mentioned in the verse,

O believers, enter into submission, all of you... (2:208)

The verse orders the believers to submit. At this level of Islam, one should have submission, obedience and compliance without any objection to God. He should further abide by every requirement of the lesser submission and the lesser faith, and should acknowledge that they are all as they should be, and anything other than what is ordained should not be.

It is this type of Islam that Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him) referred to by saying,

Truly Islam is but submission, and submission is but certitude. 14

The lesser Islam is to accept the Messenger, and the greater Islam is to accept the Sender.

The opposite of the lesser submission is the lesser disbelief, which is to deny the Messenger [Prophet Muḥammad], or to choose the other messengers or one's intellect over him. This rejection of the Prophet does not mean the rejection of God, like the case of Jews and Christians. Likewise, the opposite of the greater submission is the greater disbelief, whereby one believes in the messengership and the truthfulness of Prophet Muḥammad, but has some objections to God. Such a person chooses and prefers his own opinion over the orders of God. This type of disbelief has been referred to in the following narration by Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him):

Consider a people who worship God and do not associate anyone with Him, who perform the prayer, pay the alms, make pilgrimage to the Holy House, and fast in the month of Ramaḍān. If they say concerning anything that God or the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) has done, "Why did He [or he] not do otherwise?" or [even] if they feel so in their hearts, that would make them polytheists... You ought to have submission. 15

Thus, one becomes a Muslim of the greater Islam when he stops having any objections to the orders of God and His Messenger, and makes his opinion and intellect obedient to the religion. It is then that he enters the stage of servitude (*'ubūdiyyah*). That would be the lowest degree of servitude, and it is only then that what he does is considered as [real] worship. ¹⁶

There are certain verses in the Quran that refer to this type of Islam:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللهِ الْإِسْلَامُ...

Truly religion with God is submission... (3:19)

Is he whose breast God hath expanded for submission, so he followeth a light from his Lord [as one who is hard-hearted]?... (39:22)

In this verse, the person's submission before the expansion of his breast is the greater submission. Another verse in this regard is:

...Those who have submitted, *they* have pursued rectitude. (72:14)

This verse cannot be referring to the lesser Islam, for even the hypocrites have the lesser Islam, yet they are far away from rectitude. Likewise is the Prophetic narration,



Whoever embraces Islam [or whoever submits] belongs to me. 17

The hypocrites have embraced the lesser Islam, yet they are in the lowest pit of the Fire (4:145), no where close to the Messenger of God. Hence, the above narration is also about the greater Islam.

4. The greater faith (al-īmān al-akbar)

This type of faith has been mentioned in the verse,

يَاأَيُّهَاالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللهِ وَرَسُولِهِ...

O believers, believe in God and His Messenger... (4:136)¹⁸

That is because the verse commands the believers to believe. The relationship between the lesser Islam and the lesser faith is like that of a term and its meaning, or like that of the body and the spirit. In order to reach the lesser faith, one has to go beyond the lesser Islam—which only concerns the tongue and the outward not the heart and the inward. Similarly, the greater faith is the spirit and meaning

of the greater Islam. To reach the greater faith, one must go beyond the greater Islam, which is the stage of obedience and submission, to the stage of yearning, satisfaction and zeal. This means that one's submission should go beyond his mind and intellect, and penetrate his heart and spirit. This penetration has been mentioned in the verse,

أَفَمَزْشَرَحَ اللهُ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ...

...one whose breast God hath expanded for submission... (39:22)¹⁹

The opposite of the lesser faith is the lesser hypocrisy, which involves outward obedience and submission, but inward disobedience and resentment. Likewise, the opposite of the greater faith is the greater hypocrisy, where the person has inward obedience and submission, but only out of fear, not out of passion, yearning and zeal. His submission is difficult on his soul, rather than being pleasant and enjoyable. This type of hypocrisy has been mentioned in the verse,

...وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَّاةِ قَامُواكُسَالَى...

...When they stand up to pray they stand up without earnestness... $(4:142)^{20}$

A servant will be freed from this type of hypocrisy when his submission and obedience penetrate into his heart and spirit, and when he reaches a deeper understanding and realization of God's actions and commands.

This level of faith should diffuse through every organ and faculty of the person. This is because it is an attribute of the spirit, and the spirit is the king of the body and rules over every organ and faculty. Every part of the body is in the service of the spirit, and so the willingness and inclination of the spirit will make actions easy and light on all the organs. Thus, they will all be submissive and obedient, without even a minute of negligence or failure in this regard. Such believers have been described in these verses:

قَدْ أَفْلَعَ النَّوْمِنُونَ ۞ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ۞ وَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِمُعْرِخُونَ ۞ وَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ۞ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ. Successful indeed are the believers & Those who are humble in their prayers And those who avoid vain [talk] And those who act upon the almsgiving And those who protect their private parts. (23:1-5)

Avoiding that which is vain and futile (*laghw*) cannot be achieved unless each organ and faculty is employed in the way it was created for.²¹ This level of faith has also been mentioned in two similar narrations by al-Zubayrī and Ḥammād from Imām Ṣādiq, a summary of which is:

Faith is an obligatory duty in which every organ has a share, including the heart—which is the ruler of the body—the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the head, the hands, the legs and the private parts.²²

The narrations then describe the duty of each organ. Another narration in this regard is:

Indeed we do not count someone a believer unless he is obedient and devoted to all of our commands. Lo! Truly a part of obedience and devotion to our command is to abstain from sin (wara)...²³

God has ordered the believers to make the journey from the lesser faith to the greater faith in this verse:

Is it not time that the hearts of those who believe should be humbled to the Remembrance of God?... (57:16)

There are some narrations that imply that faith is something fixed and cannot be increased or decreased. These narrations do not contradict our discussion here about the different degrees of faith and submission. Our discussion is about the intensity of faith, which can be seen in its signs and properties, not the actual essence of faith. [That is, faith itself has a fixed threshold, but it can have different intensities which differ in terms of their signs and properties.]²⁴

Hence, the verses and narrations that describe faith as something fixed and without any increase or decrease concern the actualization of faith [as a core and basis]. But the verses and narrations that recognize the different degrees of faith concern its intensity, or the different degrees of its signs and properties. The following verse belongs to the second group:

The believers are only those whose hearts tremble [in awe] when God is mentioned, and when His signs [or verses] are recited to them, it increases them in faith... (8:2)

"It increases them in faith" means that whenever they hear any of God's prescriptions or proscriptions in His verses [of the Quran], they carry it out accordingly with determination. That would increase their share of the signs of faith. In addition, there are many signs of God in the world (āfāq lit. horizons) and within each person (anfus, lit. souls) that are being "recited" to the people as they are exposed to them either externally or internally. [These are the macrocosmic (āfāqī) and microcosmic (anfusī) signs of God. Their recitation is not by the tongue or words, but by their state of being and the traits that they display.] Based on this verse, when the believers hear or encounter these signs of God, their faith intensifies [or the signs of their faith manifest further].

There are also many narrations that describe faith as having many levels and degrees. For example:

Indeed there are seven shares of faith. Some people have one share and some have two shares. A person with one share should not be burdened with the load of a person with two shares. ²⁵

That is, the traits and actions that are required from those who have achieved two shares of gnosis should not be imposed on those who have only one share. Otherwise, it would be difficult for them. One would find it tedious and difficult to perform outward duties and actions unless his understanding and gnosis intensifies.

'Abd al-'Azīz al-Qarāṭīsī narrated from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him):

O 'Abd al-'Azīz, truly faith has ten grades. It is like a ladder that one climbs step by step... When you see someone who is a grade below you, lift him up with lenience. Do not impose a load on him that he cannot bear, for that would break him...²⁶

Faith is graded both in terms of knowledge and practice. It is needless to say that obligatory actions are incumbent on everyone. [They are the most primary requirements of faith that become incumbent on anyone who embraces faith.] Therefore, the higher degrees of faith mentioned in these narrations are based on the extent to which one follows the whole set of rites, acts, ethics and etiquettes [not merely the obligatory acts].

5. The greater migration (al-hijrat al-kubrá)

Just as the lesser migration is to physically move from the land of infidelity to the land of Islam, the greater migration is to physically move away from associating and interacting with sinners, wrongdoers and the aspirants of this deceitful world.²⁷

In this light there is a narration that describes a Shia as follows:

When he meets an imprudent person, he parts from him.²⁸

A part of the greater migration is the inward migration, which is to have no liking or inclination toward such people. Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him) said, "There are four branches of struggle (jihad)," one of them being "to dislike the evil-doers."²⁹

Another part of it is to migrate away from habits and customs, both inwardly and outwardly. This is because habits and customs are the major cities of infidelity. There is a narration from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) that

Infidelity has four pillars: desire, fear, dissatisfaction and anger.³⁰

One interpretation for fear in this narration is to fear the people [i.e. their rebuke and disapproval] and thus follow their norms and habits.

Following this migration, one should join the Prophet and make the intention to follow him in everything. It is in the Prophet's presence that one should combat and defeat the armies of Satan.

6. The greater struggle (al-jihād al-akbar)

This is to combat the armies of Satan with the aid of God's party—which is the army of the intellect. Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) said:

... ثُمَّ جَعَلَ الْمَعْلِ خَسَةً وَسَبْعِينَ جُنْداً، فَلَمَّاراً ما الْجَهْلُ مَا اَكْرَمَ اللهُ بِهِ الْمَقْلَ وَمَا أَعْطَاهُ أَضْمَرَ لَهُ الْمُدَاوَةَ، فَقَالَ الْجَهْلُ: يَا رَبِ هَذَا خَلَقُ مِثْلِي خَلَقْتَهُ وَكَرَّمْتَهُ وَقَرِّبَهُ وَأَنَا ضِلُ وَ لَا فُوَّةً لِي بِهِ الْمُدَاوَةَ، فَقَالَ الْجُهُلُ عَلَقَ مُنْ الْجُنْدِ مِثْلَ مَا أَعْطَيْتَهُ فَقَالَ: تَمْ... فَأَعْطَاهُ خَسَةً وَسَبْعِينَ جُنْداً... فَإِنَّ أَحَدَهُمْ لَا يَخُلُو فَأَعْطِينِي مِنَ الْجُنُودِ الْجَهْلِ فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونَ فِيهِ بَعْضُ هَذِهِ الْجُنُودِ حَتَّى يَسْتَصُمِلَ وَيَنْقَى مِنْ جُنُودِ الْجَهْلِ فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُودِ الْجَهْلِ فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ يَكُونُ فِي الدَّرَجَةِ الْمُلْيَامَعَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْأَوْصِيَاءِ...

...Then God assigned seventy-five armies to 'aql (intellect, prudence). Jahl (ignorance, imprudence, lack of reason) became green with envy as it saw what God gave 'aql and how He honored it. Thus jahl said, "O my Lord, this is a creature like me. Thou created it, honored it and strengthened it. I am its opponent but I have no strength. So give me armies like what Thou gave it." God replied, "Indeed..." ...So He gave jahl seventy-five armies [as well]... Anyone of our followers would not be devoid of these armies [of the intellect] altogether, until he acquires them all and is cleared from the armies of jahl. It is then that he will reach the exalted rank of being with the prophets and the saints... 31

7. Success and victory over the armies of Satan (fath wa zafar)

This is when one is delivered from the dominance of Satan, and breaks out of the realm of ignorance and nature. People at this stage have been mentioned in the following narration by Imām Şādiq (peace be upon him):

Our followers ($sh\bar{i}^cah$) are people of guidance, people of self-restraint, people of benevolence, people of faith, people of success and people of victory.³²

8. The greatest submission (al-islām al-a czam)

One is engrossed in this world of nature until he enters the realm of success and victory, whereby he defeats Satan's party and breaks out of the corporeal world. He is overwhelmed by conflicting worldly desires, and is enslaved by the armies of illusion, anger and lust. He is surrounded by hopes and ambitions, and is overshadowed by sorrows and anxieties. He is troubled by redundant customs and habits that are at odds with one another. He is pressed by things that are against his soul and conscience. Every moment he anticipates several calamities to befall him, and is concerned about numerous difficulties. There is some fear creeping in every corner of his mind, and his chest constantly burns in fire. He is occupied by every form of poverty and need, and is encircled by various pains and diseases. Sometimes he is concerned for his family and dependents, and sometimes he is fearful of losing his wealth and riches. Sometimes he seeks fame but cannot attain it, and sometimes he strives for a position but fails to achieve it. The thorns of jealousy, resentment, pride and ambitions have clung onto his being. He is humbled by the predators of the material world, and is humiliated by the scorpions of corporeality. The darkness of illusions has hardened and darkened his heart, and he is haunted by over a hundred thousand preoccupations. He gets the slap of this life wherever he turns, and the thorn of this world wherever he steps.

But when he fights and defeats the armies of illusion, anger and appetite with God's assistance, he becomes liberated from these attachments and impediments. That is when he has driven back the world of nature and matter, and has stepped out of the ocean of delusions and ambitions. He sees himself as a unique jewel and a peerless pearl that has dominance over the corporeal world. There is no death or expiration for him anymore. He is free from opposing thoughts, and is extricated from conflicting desires. He feels such a light, clarity and splendor in himself that is not comprehensible in

the world of matter. That is because he has "put down corporeality"³³ and has started a new life. He has passed the lesser spiritual resurrection, which is the death of the evil-commanding soul. So far, his knowledge had consisted of mental forms acquired from the corporeal world (mulk), but that has now changed into spiritual visions of the divine realm ($malak\bar{u}t$). Hence, he is exposed to many hidden affairs, has realized many marvelous states, and has reached his intermediate spiritual resurrection.³⁴

At this point, if the Divine grace does not save this person, he will fall into conceit and self-admiration, and will start establishing his self and ego (the "I"). One's feeling of self and ego is his inner enemy, and that is the chief of all devils. Now he has an internal enemy at this stage, just like he had outer enemies and external devils in the previous stages:

Your most hostile enemy is your own self (*nafs*) that is within you.³⁵

In fact, it was because of the selfsame conceit and egocentricity that mankind was afflicted by the corporeal world in the first place. It has been narrated that when God created the immaterial human spirit, He addressed it and said, "Who am I?" But the spirit transgressed its limits because of the splendor and grandeur that it found in itself, and replied, "Who am I?" Thus, the Lord of the universe expelled it from the realm of light and bliss, and deported it to the land of need and poverty so that it may come to know itself. 36

Likewise, when the spirit exits the world of nature and returns to its initial condition, the selfsame pride and egocentricity overcomes it. That is one of the meanings offered for the tradition,

There is nothing blocking them from looking at their Lord except His Robe of Grandeur.³⁷

That is, had they not shown pride and had they not put on God's [robe of] grandeur, they would have seen the lights of the Divine realm. At that position, if God's grace does not intervene, they will fall into the greatest infidelity (al-kufr al-a zam). Infidelity in the previous stages was either denying the Messenger, or associating partners with God due to external causes such as the outward devils and

the carnal desires. However, infidelity at this stage consists of obeying one's own devil (the *nafs*) and egoistic desires.

The first type of infidelity has been referred to in the following verses and narrations:

Did I not make a covenant with you, O Children of Adam, that you shall not worship Satan?... (36:60)

Hast thou seen him who hath taken his desire to be his god? (45:23)

The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) said,

The lowest [or the most hateful] god that is worshipped on the earth instead of God is hawá (desire, caprice, whim).³⁸

The above narration is qualified by "on the earth" because it only concerns the realm of nature. Beyond this world, the lowest and the most despicable god would be one's self and ego (nafs), which can be taken as a god only after one is freed from the realm of nature and the body, and ascends to the stage of the soul and ego. Such is the meaning of

The ego is indeed the greatest idol.³⁹

Even Abraham (peace be upon him) asked God to keep him away from this type of idolatry:

...Prevent me and my sons from worshiping idols. (14:35)

This prayer concerns the worship of the *nafs* because the worship of the physical idols by Abraham is unbelievable, for he was the *khalīl* (friend) of God. Neither is it believable by his real sons, who were all prophets.⁴⁰

The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) also sought refuge in God from this type of polytheism:

أُعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الشِّركِ الْخَفِيِّ.

I seek refuge in Thee from hidden polytheism.⁴¹

The following verse also concerns this type of polytheism:

... لَيْنَ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ...

...If thou associatest partners with God, thy works shall surely fail... (39:65)

Some great figures of divine gnosis have referred to this type of infidelity as follows: When a servant goes beyond the realm of time and space, the first station that he attains will make him think that he is the Creator. What is a bigger disbelief than this?

إِذَا قُلْتُ مَا أَذْنَبُتُ قَالَتُ مُجِيبَةً وُجُودُكَ ذَنْبُ لَا يُقَاسُ بِهِ ذَنْبُ

I said "I have no sin," But she replied and declared:

Your existence is a sin To which no sin can be compared.⁴²

The greatest submission is the opposite of this type of disbelief and infidelity. God commanded His friend (*khalīl*, i.e. Abraham) to have this type of submission:

إِذْقَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ...

When his Lord said to him, "Submit!"... (2:131)

Essentially, the greatest submission is to recognize one's nonexistence. It is when someone admits that he is a weak and wretched servant and is completely owned by his Master. It is to realize and firmly believe that the light and power that he used to see in himself were actually nothing but darkness and poverty. Not only that, but the person should fade out before the Absolute Being and the Sheer Light.

9. The greatest faith (al-īmān al-a czam)

At this stage, the wayfarer actually feels and witnesses his nonexistence, after having accepted and admitted it at the stage of the greatest submission. This notion is realized when the greatest submission intensifies and transcends the limit of knowledge and confirmation, to the level of clear vision and manifestation. Abraham reached this vision and manifestation after he was ordered to submit:

When his Lord said to him, "Submit," he said, "I have submitted to the Lord of all beings." (2:131)⁴³

Likewise is the verse,

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي.

Enter thou among My servants. (89:29)

This is the stage where true servitude is actualized for the person as a spiritual vision and experience. It is when the wayfarer leaves the realm of angels (malakūt) and experiences his greater spiritual resurrection (al-qiyāmah al-kubrá al-anfusiyyah). He thus enters the realm of immaterial intellects (jabarūt) and benefits from divine immaterial visions. He advances from the realm of the souls attached to the celestial spheres (sing. falak), to a realm that is utterly immaterial and disentangled from bodies. The following poem expresses the poet's aspiration to attain this stage:

What holds me back is my being, Which lies between me and Thee;

So remove it from between us By Thy mercy and decree.⁴⁴

10. The greatest migration (al-hijrat al- uzmá)

It is to migrate from one's own existence and bid farewell to it, in order to journey toward the realm of absolute existence and be completely focused on it. This migration has been commanded in the saying,

Leave your self and come (da c nafsaka wa ta cal). 45
It has also been referred to in verse 89:30,

O soul at peace & Return unto thy Lord, well-pleased and well-pleasing & Enter thou among My servants & Enter thou My Paradise. (89:27-30)

In verse 89:27, "O soul at peace" addresses a soul that has completed the greater struggle and has reached the realm of success and victory, where it finds peace. However, this soul has yet to achieve its final destination. That is why it is ordered, "Return unto thy Lord." The verse further describes how the soul should make this return: "Return unto thy Lord, well-pleased and well-pleasing." Thus, verse 89:29—"Enter thou among My servants"—refers to the greatest faith, and verse 89:30—"Enter thou My Paradise"—is a further stage, where one abandons his own existence and enters the realm of sincerity, which is the soul's return to its Lord. 46

The greatest faith has also been mentioned in the verse,

فِي مَقْعَدِ صِدُقِ عِنْدَ مَلِيكِ مُقْتَدِرٍ.

In a seating of truth, in the presence of an Omnipotent King. (54:55)

Seating of truth or true seating means absolute existence, which is achieved when the person realizes the truth of the matter: the nonexistence of one's "self." However, the greatest struggle has still not taken place, and therefore the properties and traces of one's existence still remain. The eradication of these properties hinges upon further struggle. That is why the person is in the presence of the two Names, "Omnipotent" and "King," for he is still not completely secure from God's whip of wrath and dominance.⁴⁷

11. The greatest struggle (al-jihād al-a czam)

After migrating out of one's own existence, one should combat the faint remaining properties and traces of his existence. One does so by appealing to the Omnipotent King so that those properties are eradicated and removed altogether, and the person arrives at absolute unity.

12. Sincerity (khulūs)

We have already looked at the realm of sincerity. It is the realm of success and victory that one achieves after the greatest struggle. This realm has been referred to in the verse,

...أختاء عِندربيم...

... They are living, there with their Lord... (3:169)

This verse is one of the Divine Names to which the wayfarer subscribes in the realm of sincerity. Here the wayfarer is safe and secure from every kind of wrath, and is cared for and fostered by his Eternal Lord. The following verses are also about this stage:

O soul at peace @ Return unto thy Lord... (89:27-28)

...إِنَّالِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاحِعُونَ.

...Truly we belong to God, and to Him we return. (2:156)

The cost of their meeting Is the blood of the lover.

If you long for their meeting, Its cost you shall cover.

This is where the greater spiritual resurrection for the wayfarer occurs, whereby he goes beyond all bodies, spirits, entities and determinations altogether. He is annihilated from all of them, steps into the realm of Divinity ($l\bar{a}h\bar{u}t$), and subsists by a real eternal life. Before this realm, the person had experienced visions of the immaterial intellects, but now he benefits from visions of the Divine manifestations.

...وَذَلِكَ هُوَالْفَوْزُالْعَظِيمُ.

...That is a magnificent triumph. (9:111 and 40:9)

لِثْلِ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ.

For the like of this, the workers shall work. (37:61) At that point, the following verse is no longer applicable:

كُلُّ نَفْسِ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ...

THE RESIDENCE OF THE PARTY OF T

Every soul shall taste death... (3:185, 21:35 and 29:57)

That is because there is no soul that remains. Instead, the person would be a case of:

One who was dead, then We gave him life and provided him with a light by which he walks among the people... (6:122)

He will be one of those excepted in this verse:

The Trumpet is blown, and whoever is in the heavens and whoever is in the earth swoon, save whomever God willeth... (39:68)

Such a person is both dead and alive. He has died out of the realm of nature and soul by voluntary death, and is living in the realm of Divinity and sincerity, which is the real life. Thus it has been said,

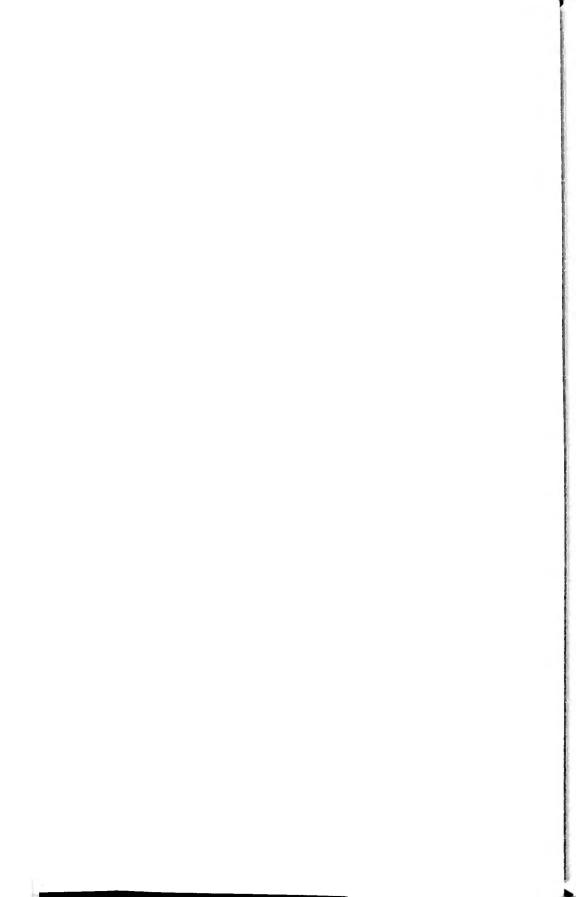
Whoever wants to look at a dead man walking shall look at 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him). 48



PART II

Two Descriptions of the Journey toward God

Now that you know the description of the twelve realms, I shall explain to you how one should journey and travel through them. To provide you with more insight, I will discuss the path in two ways: in brief and in detail. May God assist you on your journey.





Chapter 5

A Brief Overview of How to Journey toward God

This discussion pertains to a person who has already awakened and decided to seek the truth, not someone who is totally heedless and unaware of the spiritual journey. The first thing that this person should do is to explore and research the sects and religions as much as he can with determination and resolution. He should refer to and reflect upon any proof, sign and evidence in this regard, including those that are obtained through the senses, reason, spiritual experience and intuition. He should strive and do his best to discover God's unity and His guidance. The person's capacity might bring him to the lowest degree of knowledge and certainty, but that is all right. At this stage, even a simple guess or conjecture that is slightly preferred to the other alternatives would help. Once the person has made this confirmation or inclination, he will be out of the realm of disbelief and into the realms of lesser submission and lesser faith. That is essentially how one goes about these two realms.

In case of uncertainty in finding the truth, one should entreat and plead to God

All scholars agree that every mature person ought to have a proof in order to reach these two realms. But what should one do if he has no tendency or disposition toward faith even though he has done his best in terms of searching, contemplating, and examining different views? In that case, he should engage in supplication, lamentation, pleading and imploring. He should insist on doing so, for it will indeed bring about an opening for him. This is what has been narrated about Prophet Idrīs (Enoch) and his followers. 1

Here, in order to reach certitude, it is best for the person to be engaged in certain invocations that are effective at this stage. Some of these invocations will be discussed later on [in Chapter 6].

Once a person achieves these two realms, he should set out for the greater submission and the greater faith. The first thing that one needs at this stage is to know about the rituals, rulings, manners and duties prescribed by the guide and leader that he believes in. These duties are to be obtained directly from that guide, or indirectly through his successors and representatives. One can also extract them from his words if he has the expertise to do so, or otherwise follow a competent individual in this field, called a faqīh (jurist).

Knowledge and practice: one leads to another

One should acquire the relevant knowledge, abide by his duties, and refrain from having any resentment or objection toward them. He should hold fast to these duties and observe their decorum so that his certitude and gnosis increase and manifest step by step. Thus, his actions and the signs of his faith intensify and become more evident in his organs and limbs. That is because action brings about knowledge, and knowledge brings about action. There are numerous narrations in this regard, such as the following words of Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him):

...Truly faith has ten grades. It is like a ladder that one climbs step by step...²

...Lo! Truly some parts of faith are a result of other parts.3

Knowledge is tied to practice. Thus, whoever knows, practices; and whoever practices, knows...⁴

...Faith cannot be without action, [for] action is a part of it, and faith does not stabilize save by some action.⁵

... لَا يَثْبُتُ لَهُ الْإِيمَانُ إِلَّا بِالْعَمَلِ وَالْعَمَلُ مِنْهُ.

...Faith does not stabilize for one except by action; action is a part of it.⁶

The sermons and sayings of Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him) also suggest—both explicitly and implicitly—that a complete faith is a result of practice.' Thus, whoever wants to achieve the greater faith should do so through practice.

However, one should go about this with mildness and lenience, as was mentioned in the narration by 'Abd al-'Azīz.⁸ When one takes up an act of worship it is important that he continues with it, because based on repeatedly reported narrations (mutawātir), doing a few acts of worship with persistence is better in the eyes of God than doing a lot of worship now and then.

Every organ and faculty should receive its share of faith

A wayfarer should climb up the ladder of faith step by step, until his every organ and faculty gets to have its share of faith, and no limb is left without a share. The person should get to a point where all his faculties—whether internal or external—are given their full shares of faith. The way to achieve this is by observing what has been commanded or prohibited, including the obligatory and the optional. Any neglect in this regard means an equal imperfection in one's faith, and as long as one's faith is not perfect, he cannot take even the smallest step into the higher realms. That is because as we mentioned above, the realms that a wayfarer should pass in his journey to God are like the hours of a day which come one after another; as long one has not fully elapsed the next one does not begin.

It has been narrated that once a wayfarer went to see a sheikh (spiritual master), hoping to reach lofty stations through him. He found the sheikh in the mosque and saw him spitting there. Thus he returned right away, because he found the sheikh to be a deviant [from proper manners].⁹

Here is another anecdote in this regard: Once the plowing cow of a wayfarer stepped into a land that had been donated for a charitable purpose (mawqūfah, an endowment) and then came back to his own land. Since some of the soil of the consecrated land had been transferred to his land and mixed with his soil, he did not eat from the yield of his land that year. ¹⁰

The good deeds by the pious are evil deeds for the intimates. 11

The word of God, Glorified and Exalted He is, is a sufficient exposition in this regard:

Successful indeed are the believers @ ... @ Those who avoid that which is vain (*laghw*). (23:1 and 23:3)

That which is vain (laghw) is not limited to vain talk. Rather, any act by any limb is vain if it is not in accordance with God's command, does not bring about reward and light, and is not deemed desirable by Him.

The most important part of a person that should receive its share of faith is the heart. That is because the heart is the king of the body, and its faith would disseminate and circulate to the rest of the organs and limbs, as was mentioned in the narrations by al-Zubayrī and Ḥammād. Hence, it is incumbent on a wayfarer to have a close watch over the condition of his heart at all times. The faith of the heart consists of remembrance and contemplation (*dhikr* and *fikr*), and this is why there are many narrations that identify remembrance and contemplation as the best acts of worship.

It is for the same reason that the Book of God says,

...Indeed the remembrance of God is greater... (29:45)

The utmost degree of faith is achieved through the remembrance of God:

...Verily, it is in the remembrance of God that the hearts find rest. (13:28)

If the heart is deprived of its requirements of faith [such as the remembrance of God] so will the other organs:

Whoever turneth a blind eye to the remembrance of the All-Merciful, to him We assign a devil who becometh his companion. (43:36)

Once the wayfarer has given every organ and faculty its share of faith, and has made them habituated to following the implications of faith without violation, he should turn to the realm of spiritual combat and struggle. He must depart from the implications of his imagination (wahm), appetite (shahwah) and anger (ghaḍab), stop associating with the people of this world and the friends of Satan, and migrate away from the social norms and habits:

...وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَانِمٍ...

...They fear not the blame of any blamer [in the path of God]... (5:54)

Thus, he should join with his intellect¹³ and its army to fight against the host of the devils and the armies of his lusts and desires.

Of course, this stage of struggle is not completely subsequent to the previous stages [of the diffusion of faith in every organ and faculty]. Rather, the two complement each other. The outward actualization of faith in many cases depends upon inward purification and well-being, and the inward actualization of faith hinges upon bodily actions. Thus, these two stages go hand in hand, and they are completed simultaneously.

One should be familiar with spiritual medicine in order to cure his inner self

The first and foremost thing that a person needs at this stage [of struggle] is to learn about spiritual medicine. That is the knowledge of what benefits or harms the soul, virtues and vices, the hidden aspects of one's self, the deceptions of the ego, and the contrivances of the armies of Satan. This is the jurisprudence of nafs (soul, self, ego), just as there is a jurisprudence for the bodily limbs and outward actions. The teacher of this jurisprudence is the intellect, as opposed to a jurist who is the teacher of the jurisprudence of bodily limbs. This has been mentioned in the following narrations:

الْعَقْلُ دَلِيلُ الْمُؤْمِنِ.

The intellect is the guide of a believer. 14

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYING AND WAYFARING

... إِنَّ يِنَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ مُجَّتَيْنِ: حُجَّةٌ ظَاهِرَةً وَ حُجَّةٌ بَاطِنَةً. فَأَمَّا الظَّاهِرَةُ فَالرُّسُلُ وَالأَنْبِيَاءُ وَالأَنِمَةُ (عليهم الشلام)، وَأَمَّا الْبَاطِنَةُ فَالْمُقُولُ...

...Truly God has two proofs and arguments against the people: one that is apparent and one that is hidden. The apparent one is the messengers, prophets and leaders (peace be upon them), and the hidden one is the intellects...¹⁵

However, in most of the people, their intellects have become tarnished due to their immersion in the world of nature. The confrontation of their intellects with the armies of their illusion, appetite and anger has made their intellects incapable of grasping the subtle deceptions of the hosts of Satan and the ways by which they prevail. Thus, the only way for them is to resort to religion and the principles that it offers, because after all:

I have been sent [as a messenger] to complete the noble moral traits. 16

The necessity of having a master and sheikh

Hence, the seeker of truth has no alternative but to refer to a guide. If such a guide is not presently accessible, he should refer to his successor, his representative or his words.

One cannot go through this stage [of struggle] unless he knows how to extrapolate all the properties of the path, spiritual diseases and their cures, what benefits or harms the souls, what is the appropriate remedy for each person, and in what order they should be applied. These are indeed hidden and subtle matters, and therefore they require a perfect intellect, an acute insight, a strong capacity, a divine aptitude, a profound knowledge and a great effort. The attainment of such knowledge [of the realm of struggle and the subtleties of the soul] before having it carried out is very difficult, rather impossible. That is why the seeker of this path has no alternative but to refer to a guide, or someone who serves that purpose, and that is called a spiritual master or sheikh.¹⁷

The qualities that a master should have

Just as there are certain conditions for a master of Islamic law (a jurist of the body), there are conditions for a master of the soul (a jurist of the spirit). In each field, one should first learn about these conditions, and then make sure that the jurist that he refers to has these qualifications. Otherwise, it is not permissible to refer to an unverified jurist, and acting upon his rulings would be void.

How to identify a spiritual master

Of course, identifying a master in the field of spirituality is more difficult than identifying a jurist in exoteric matters. There are far more conditions for a spiritual master.



My friend! The bandits on this path are a lot; Only a few can make it to the spot.¹⁸

There is another difference between a master of outward law, who is called a jurist (faqīh), and a master of spiritual law, who is called a sheikh: The path of outward law is patent and evident, it equally applies to everyone, and the robbers and bandits on it are known and few. As a result, it is sufficient for a master of this path to merely show the path and identify the deceivers. However, in spiritual law and medicine, every person has his distinct path, the illness of each person is different from the other, and there is no set manual for identifying one's disease and cure. It is very difficult to identify someone's problem and discern what the solution is. There are countless obstacles and numerous defiles to traverse, and there are infinitely many hidden bandits who are very difficult to identify. ¹⁹

It may very well be that a bandit of this path would appear in the form of a dervish (i.e. a mystic). Because of these complexities, the only solution is to have a sheikh and master who watches over the wayfarer and keeps his company at all times. Furthermore, it is incumbent on the wayfarer to consult his master at every corner of the path. This is why the wayfarers of this path spend several years with their masters, without even a minute of absence from his presence.

In spiritual law, much like outward law, the completion of faith can be identified by the appearance of its signs in one's soul. If a soul is missing any sign or property of faith, it means that there is a corresponding imperfection and deficiency in its faith. As a result, such a soul cannot step into the higher realms.

If a wayfarer puts all of his effort in his journey, and travels on this path with the grace of God and the direction of a spiritual master, he will be redeemed from any defects in his lesser submission and lesser faith. He will realize any mistakes that he might have made, and the straight path becomes evident to him. He will thus go beyond estimations and conjectures, and will achieve vision and certitude.

And worship thy Lord until certitude cometh to thee. (15:99)

...If you obey him [the Prophet], you will be guided... (24:54)

As for those who struggle in Our cause, We surely guide them in Our paths... (29:69)

Truly I am indeed All-Forgiving to him who repenteth, and believeth, and acteth righteously, and then followeth guidance. (20:82)²⁰

Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon him) has described those who struggle and the result of their endeavors as follows:

...He has abandoned the quality of blindness and is no longer among those who follow their desires. He has become a key to the gates of guidance, and a lock to the gates of misguidance. He has indeed seen his path and has trodden his way. He has identified the lights that illuminate his way, and has crossed the darknesses. He has clung onto the most reliable of handles and the firmest of ropes. Thus, he is on such certitude that is as [bright as] sunlight...²¹

... هَجَمَ بِهِمُ الْعِلْمَ عَلَى حَقِيقَةِ الْبَصِيرَةِ، وَبَاشَرُوا رَوْحَ (رُوحَ) الْيَقِينِ، وَ اسْتَلَانُوا مَا اسْتَوْعَرَهُ الْمُتَرُفُونَ، وَأَيْسُوا بِمَا اسْتَوْحَشَ مِنْهُ الْجَاهِلُونَ، وَصَحِبُوا الدُّنْيَا بِأَبْدَانٍ أَرْوَاحُهَا مُعَلَّقَةُ (مُتَعَلَّقَةُ) بِالْتَحَلِّ الْأَغْلَ...

...Knowledge has rushed them toward true insight, and they have embraced the breeze [or the spirit] of certitude. They have found easy what extravagant individuals find difficult, and have become intimate with what ignorant people find frightening. Their bodies are in this world while their spirits cling to [or are attached to] the Supreme Realm...²²

Of course, the guidance described in the above verses and narrations does not apply to one who has not striven as he should, or one who has shown negligence at any stage of the path. This could be a person who has not put all his effort in his first quest—which is to seek the lesser submission and faith—and has thus chosen a misguided leader. Or it could be one who has not followed his jurist, has disobeyed his sheikh, or has not endeavored to identify them. It could also be a person that has not given his every limb its share of faith, or a person that has not taken spiritual remedies in the right order. I shall provide you with an illustration of such mistakes later on [in Chapter 6].

As a wayfarer and seeker completes the above realms and overcomes the armies of Satan and ignorance, he would enter the [first] realm of success and victory. This occurs when one has completed the realm of the body and has entered the realm of the spirit. Thus, he should embark on his journey to the subsequent realms, which is to move from the realm of the soul and spirit ($malak\bar{u}t$, the realm of angels) to the realm of the immaterial intellects ($jabar\bar{u}t$), the realm of the Divine Names ($l\bar{a}h\bar{u}t$) and what follows after.

After one's allegiance to a well-versed sheikh, the main components of the journey are *dhikr* (remembrance), *fikr* (contemplation), *tabattul* (cutting off from everything and devoting one's self to God), *taḍarru* and *ibtihāl* (imploring humbly and earnestly to God):

And remember the Name of thy Lord, and devote thyself unto Him with a complete devotion. (73:8)

Remember thy Lord within thyself, humbly and with awe... (7:205)

That is why God has described His remembrance being greater than prayer (*ṣalāh*), even though the latter is the pillar of religion.²³ Likewise, according to Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him), contemplation is the best of worships, for one hour of contemplation is better than seventy years of worship.²⁴

The completion of this last stage of the journey means the completion of *everything*—there will no longer be any speech, contemplation, solitude, wayfaring, aspiration, traveler, destination, imperfection or perfection.

When the speech gets to God, stop!²⁵

The above was a brief overview of how to journey toward the realm of sincerity.



Chapter 6

A Detailed Description of How to Journey toward God

The experts in spirituality have discussed the phases and stages of the spiritual journey, and have explained how a wayfarer should travel through them. There are different classifications of these stages, ranging from seven to seven hundred, even seventy thousand according to some.¹

Most of these stages and obstacles are positioned in the realm of the *nafs* (soul, self, ego), meaning that they fall under the greater struggle. The order of these stages varies from person to person, but to achieve perfection in faith, one must fulfill all of them. Otherwise, the faith of one's soul will be incomplete to the extent that he has not completed his spiritual journey. Therefore, there is no need to enumerate and discuss all of the stages; rather, it suffices to emphasize that the wayfarers should keep up the greater struggle as they go through every stage and obstacle on their journey.

The essence of wayfaring and the key to it

The essence of wayfaring and the key to it can be summarized in two points: first, to bring one's body and soul under the control and dominion of faith, according to the instructions of the outward law and the spiritual law; and second, to annihilate one's soul in God's dominion. These two embrace every stage and obstacle of the spiritual journey.

There are certain conditions that one should observe if he wants to undertake this journey, travel through these stages, and complete the path. Without these conditions, one cannot reach the destination. Not only that, but one cannot take even a single step on the spiritual path without observing these conditions.

This is not the place to discuss the stages of the path, the dangers of the journey, and the twists and turns of the soul. If such a discussion were necessary here, so would be a discussion on the bodily organs and limbs (the outward law), for they are also stages of the journey.

Instead, what we shall discuss in this treatise are only the main guidelines by which one can go through this dangerous path and reach the destination. What follows is therefore a discussion of these essential matters and conditions.

Acquaintance with the laws of faith

Once the wayfarer sets off on his quest and reaches the realms of lesser submission and lesser faith, the first thing that is incumbent upon him is to acquire knowledge of the laws of faith. The way to acquire this knowledge was mentioned above.² This duty has been mentioned in the tradition,

Seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim man and woman.³

Without this knowledge, the person will be defeated no matter how much he struggles:

One who acts without insight is like one who travels on the wrong path: His journey only takes him farther away [from the destination].⁴

The clearer this knowledge is, the more efficient and effective it will be. Hence, it is best if one can get this knowledge from a prophet or his successor. If not, it is better to extract it from their words than to follow someone else. This knowledge involves an overall knowledge of anything that is necessary for one's journey, but there is no need to know about things that are not initially required. One will learn those further details as he gets to know his soul. The important thing is to find the source of knowledge, not to actually know everything right away. The wayfarer should extract the higher

10.00

degrees of knowledge gradually as he comes to need them. Therefore, what is mentioned above concerns the prerequisites for the journey, when the wayfarer has not yet set out on his path.

Once a wayfarer has acquired this knowledge, he should embark on his journey by pleading to God for help.⁵

The requirements of wayfaring toward God

There are many conditions for this journey, the most important of which are as follows:

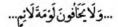
1. Abandoning habits (tark al- 'ādāt)

This includes giving up the personal habits and social norms and customs that serve as obstacles on the path of God and prevent one from journeying.

There are some souls who care not for fame; They are not scared of dishonor or blame.

They are not Muslims, Christians, or Jews; They have no title; they are freed from name.

This characteristic has been mentioned in the verse,



...They fear not the blame of any blamer [in the path of God]... (5:54)

A wayfarer should stop conforming to habits and customs, and should instead concentrate on his own well-being and progress. Avoiding the blame of the inhabitants of the spiritual world is more important than avoiding the blame of the children of this world.

There is a general repentence that is incumbent on everyone, and that is to repent of all sins as per the faith and jurisprudence of the bodily limbs. Then there is another repentence that is specifically incumbent on those who engage in wayfaring, and that is nothing but the abandoning of habits and social norms, as the first stage of the greater struggle.

2. Determination (cazm)

A wayfarer must be so resolute and determined that he does not give up his path at any price. Nothing should make him retreat—even if he has to fight against the greatest warriors, confront the sharpest swords and spears, and endure various difficulties and fears.

3. Lenience and moderation (rifq wa mudārāh)

The soul will break if it is loaded with a heavy burden at once. Not only that, but it will become reluctant and unwilling to carry on the path any further, as discussed in the narration by 'Abd al-'Azīz.⁶ Here are a few narrations concerning lenience and moderation:

Knowledge is the friend of a believer, prudence [or reason] is his vizier, and lenience is his brother.

Truly this religion is strong, so enter it with lenience.8

Do not make worship hateful to yourselves.9

4. Loyalty $(waf\bar{a}^{\dot{\gamma}})^{10}$

5. Steadfastness and persistence (thabāt wa dawām)

Being steadfast and persistent is required so that a state ($h\bar{a}$) may turn into a station ($maq\bar{a}m$). A few deeds that are consistently done are better than abundant deeds that are done inconsistently. Imam Bāqir (peace be upon him) said,

The most beloved of acts to God is what a servant performs continuously even if it is not much. 12

Steadfastness means that when a wayfarer makes the determination to observe something and stay loyal to it, he should hold on to it without wavering. Abandoning an act is dangerous, because the reality of that act [in the higher realms] would then become the person's enemy and oppose him on his way. Hence, as long as one is not certain about his loyalty and steadfastness in an action, he should not set out on it.

It is for this reason that lenience has been prescribed. Lenience and moderation allow the wayfarer to take control of his body and his *nafs* (soul, ego), and to develop the required steadfastness for more difficult tasks. One should not commence on any stage of the journey if he is not certain of his steadfastness in that stage. Instead, he must stay at the previous stage, so that his state may turn into a station. The steadfastness mentioned here is a form of patience (*ṣabr*).

6. Self-vigilance (murāqabah)

Self-vigilance is to be present and watchful over one's self at all times, so that one would not miss anything that he has made an intention to do. ¹³

7. Self-reckoning (muḥāsabah)

This has been commanded in the following narrations:

Take account of yourselves before you are taken account of. 14

One who does not take account of himself every day is not one of us. 15

Self-reckoning consists of allocating a time every day to examine the account of oneself on that day. The person should scrutinize his past twenty-four hours since his last reckoning, and see if he has observed the things that are incumbent either on his body or his soul—including both the general obligatory matters, and things which he has specifically taken on himself (at the stage of determination).

8. Self-punishment (mu 'ākhadhah)

Self-punishment is a person's governance, discipline and punishment of himself whenever he fails or violates his duties. In such cases, one should turn to one's self and reprimand it—even beat and punish it. Here are a few anecdotes narrated in this regard:

One of the great mystics had a whip beside his prayer mat, with which he used to punish himself upon self-reckoning and learning about his defects.

Another mystic once came across a new building, where he asked, "When was this built?" Then he abstained from drinking water for a year because of having asked a vain question. 16

At the time of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), a person engaged in forty years of worship for having once complained about the heat.

In addition, if there is some recompense or restitution prescribed in religion for that violation, the person should act on it right away.

9. Promptness in action (musāra cah)

One has to be prompt in carrying out what he intends and determines to do, as the Quran has commanded (3:133). He should not delay acting on it, as it would give Satan the opportunity to whisper temptations in his soul to dissuade him.

10. Devotion (irādah)

This is to be sincerely dedicated and fully attached to the legislator of the religion and his successors. This love and devotion of the heart must be at its utmost perfection, without any impurity.

This is a crucial stage and a necessary condition for benefiting from one's acts of worship and spiritual practices. Some clear proof for this are the many narrations stating that the acts and worship of one who is devoid of the Prophet's guardianship are void and rejected. Therefore, a part of the spiritual journey is to acquire this love.

A complement to this devotion is to have devotion and sincerity toward the progeny of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family), those related to them, and their sacred signs such as their tombs, mausoleums, books and narrations.

أَذِلُ لِآلِ لَيْلَى فِي هَوَاهَا وَأَحْتَمِلُ الْأَصَاغِرَوَ الْكِبَارَا

Laylá's relatives I respect for her; Against their trouble, I endure and bear.

Every law and principle is from God, and every creature is related to Him. Thus, one should show love and affection to all creatures, including animals and other creatures, as it befits each of them. According to the narrations, a main branch of faith is to show compassion to the creatures of God.¹⁸



I love the heights of Najd Due to my love for her.

Why should I have loved them, Were this love not there?¹⁹

Overall, one should observe the outward requirements and implications of love and devotion, for they have a direct effect on the inward actualization of devotion. One must also show devotion to his master and sheikh, and to the scholars of religion.²⁰

When I pass by the town of my beloved, The walls and the doors I kiss them all.

I'm not so crazy about the town, Except for the one who's *behind* the wall.²¹

11. Showing courtesy toward God, His Messenger, and his successors (adab)

This is different from devotion, although the two have some common elements. Having courtesy and proper manners is one of the most important requirements of the path. Here are a few examples of how the saints and mystics of the past used to show courtesy toward God:

In the time of one of the Imāms, someone once said something in his presence that had a slight implication that the Imām has some power. Because of that remark, the Imām (peace be upon him) threw himself on the ground at once and placed his forehead on dust in prostration.

In another case, a mystic filled his mouth with ash because of saying something that entailed an objection [to God's will and decree].

There used to be certain people of spirituality that would not read the Quran while seated. Instead, they would stand up facing the *qiblah* (Mecca), hold the Holy Book with both hands, and recite it with utter humility and lowliness. They would not sit before the Quran except with total courtesy, as one sitting in the presence of a king.

There were others who used to stand up in respect and honor when there was a mention of the names of God, the Prophet or the Imāms (peace be upon them).

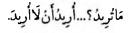
Some mystics lived as if they could see God present with them, Exalted He is. They would show due respect and courtesy in every behavior and action, including how they sat, walked and ate.

It is also necessary to be polite and courteous when making a request and supplication to God. One should avoid using imperatives and words of command.²²

12. Intention (niyyah)

It is crucial to have a sincere intention in the spiritual journey—rather in everything a person does. Any act that one does must be sincerely for God, Exalted He is. One has to cut his desire for any worldly gain, and not only that, but he should also have no eye on any reward or benefit in the Hereafter. As a general rule, one must have no objective or desire for anything that pertains to himself.

At higher levels of spirituality, one gets to a point where he has no intention or objective at all. Once a great mystic was asked, "What is it that you want?" He replied,



From then on, the wayfarer should not be concerned with whether he will get to see [his Beloved] or not, whether he will reach [the destination] or not, whether he will come to know [the secrets] or not, and whether he will be accepted [by God] or not.²⁴ In fact, the perfection of love hinges upon even forgetting the Beloved;²⁵ otherwise, the person would still be occupied by his love and desire. This is what is meant by the severing of desires.²⁶

13. Silence (samt)

There are two types of silence: 1. Limited and conditioned silence, which is for all times. 2. Absolute silence, which is for certain times and specific cases.

The first type is to withhold the tongue from talking to people more than what is necessary, and to keep the necessary talk to the lowest amount possible. This type of silence should be observed by a wayfarer throughout his spiritual journey. Rather, it should be absolutely observed by everyone at all times. The narrations that praise, recommend and prescribe silence pertain to this type. For example:

إِنَّمَاشِيعَتْنَا الْخُرْسُ.

Truly our followers (shī ah) are the mute ones.27

Silence is the slogan of the lovers [of God], and in it lies the Lord's pleasure. It is among the manners of the prophets and slogans of the chosen ones.²⁸

Silence is one of the gates of wisdom, and it is truly a guide to every good.²⁹

This is why some of the Companions of the Prophet used to put pebbles in their mouths in order to accustom themselves to silence.³⁰

The second type of silence is to absolutely withhold the tongue from talking to the people or making any utterance whatsoever. This is one of the required conditions for verbal invocations (sing. *dhikr*) that are prescribed with a specific number, timing or length.³¹

If one finds it difficult or impossible to make such invocations without any interruption, he should complete the prescribed num-

ber in multiple sittings that are not far apart from one another, and should avoid four things during the intervals between them: associating with the ordinary people, talking a lot, sleeping a lot, and eating a lot.³²

As with general invocations that are not prescribed with a specific number, it is not incumbent to observe this type of silence, although it is recommended.

14. Hunger (j #9

Hunger or eating little is one of the crucial conditions of wayfaring. Of course, abstinence from eating should neither deprive one of the energy needed for wayfaring, nor disturb one's well-being. Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) spoke of this condition in the following narration:

Hunger is the condiment of a believer, the food of the spirit, and the nourishment of the heart.³³

The best type of hunger is fasting, which is sometimes compulsory, as in certain verbal invocations.

15. Seclusion and retreat (khalwah)

There are two types of seclusion: general and particular.

General seclusion—also called solitude ("uzlah")—is to keep away from ordinary people, meaning those who are not the people of God (ahl Allāh) [i.e. those who are not seeking God and are not concerned with journeying toward Him]. One should especially avoid associating with [women], children, laymen, people who are weak in terms of reason, sinners, and the seekers of this world. A wayfarer should not associate with these people unless there is a need or necessity. However, this type of seclusion does not require a specific location, nor does it contradict consorting and associating with the people of obedience [to God].

The narrations that describe seclusion and recommend solitude pertain to this type of seclusion. For example:

One who observes solitude has taken refuge in God's fortress and has gone under His guard. Therefore, blessed is the person who renders himself alone with Him [or renders himself alone by means of solitude] in private and public.

Run away from the people as you run away from lions and vipers, for indeed they used to be remedies but have now turned to maladies.

There has been no prophet or prophet's successor who did not choose to live in solitude, either early in his life or toward the end.³⁴

Restrain your tongues, and stay at your homes...35

The Prophet's stay in the cave of Ḥirā' (a mountain in Mecca) is also an example of this type of seclusion. Likewise is the verse,

Leave alone those who take their religion for play and diversion, and whom the life of this world has deluded... (6:70)

This type of seclusion is always desirable.

Then there is particular seclusion, which is considered by the sheikhs of the path as a required condition for certain verbal invocations, and indeed for all verbal invocations [that are prescribed specifically, not as a general prescription for everyone]. Of course, it would be meritorious if it could be observed for all kinds of worship and invocation. What the masters of litany and invocation mean by *khalwah* is this type of seclusion. The conditions of observing this type of seclusion are: being alone, being away from crowded and noisy places, and not hearing any sounds that disturb one's spiritual state. In terms of location, the place should be lawful and the building should be pure, including the ceiling and the walls. In terms of space, it should be only big enough for the person to sit there and do his worship. Jesus' instruction that "You should fit in your house"³⁶

refers to this condition. It is also best if the place has no windows or openings, except for the main door.

When the person enters the place where he wants to observe seclusion, it is recommended to recite,

...My Lord, make me enter with truth and make me exit with truth, and grant me from Thy presence a sustained authority. (17:80)

Then he should recite,

In the name of God; by God; may God send peace upon Muḥammad and his family.

He should then perform two units of prayer, in which he recites the following verse after Chapter 1 (*al-Fātiḥah*) in the first unit:

Whosoever doeth evil, or wrongeth himself, then seeketh God's forgiveness, he shall find God All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate. (4:110)

In the second unit, after Chapter 1 he should recite,

...Our Lord, in Thee we trust, unto Thee we turn, and to Thee is the return. (60:4)

To make invocation, one should sit on the earth, or on something that grows from the earth like a mat of hessian or bulrush. He should sit facing the *qiblah* (Mecca) on his knees, or cross-legged, or leaning on his left leg in such a way that his right shin is placed on his left sole (called *mutawarrik*). It is also important that the person makes the place fragrant, especially with suitable incenses (sing. $bakh\bar{u}r$).

16. Night vigil (sahar)

A wayfarer should wake up at nights [for worship and contemplation] based on his natural and physiological capacity, as per God's description of the self-restrained servants:

كَانُواقَلِيلاً مِنَ اللَّيْلِ مَايَهْجَمُونَ

They used to sleep but little of the night. (51:17)

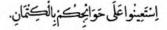
17. Constant ritual purity

18. Showing utmost humility, abjectness and entreaty toward the All-Mighty Lord

19. Abstaining from what one craves for as much as possible

20. Concealment of the secrets (kitmān al-sirr)

This is one of the most essential requirements of the path. Not only does it apply to one's actions and litanies on the path, but it also applies to a wayfarer's spiritual states, whether they are temporary or permanent. The sheikhs of the spiritual path and the masters of invocation have commanded this condition and placed infinite emphasis on it. They have considered the slightest violation of this requirement enough to prevent one from reaching the desired destination in the journey. When one's secret is about to be discovered, the masters of spirituality have ordered their disciples to abandon and oppose their intention and determination (*'azm'*), and conceal the matter by *tawriyah* in speech (doublespeak, concealing what one really intends and declaring it in a way that would be interpreted otherwise, expedient dissimulation). There are many narrations in this regard:



Seek help for your needs through concealment.³⁷

Likewise, the Master of the Saints, Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him), told Maytham al-Tammār:

Sometimes I feel that the secrets in my chest Have taken away my peace and my rest.

So I dig a hole in the earth with my hand, And leave my secrets therein as a guest.

If you see a plant growing from the earth, It is the fruit of the secrets in my breast. 38

Other narrations are:

...God has not been worshiped by anything more beloved to Him than concealment...³⁹

Truly this matter of ours [our divinely authorized guardianship] is concealed and covered by [God's] covenant. Thus, God shall abase anyone who unveils it against us.⁴⁰

By God, I wish I could give some of the flesh of my hand in ransom to free our followers (shī^cah) from two traits: lack of tolerance and lack of concealment.⁴¹

...Truly you have a religion that whoever conceals it shall be honored by God, and whoever disseminates it shall be dishonored by God.⁴²

Jābir ibn Yazīd said,

Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him) told me seventy thousand narrations that I have not and will not tell anyone. When the

Imām passed away, I felt that my heart was compressed by them and I could not carry the heavy load of those narrations. So I told Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) about my condition. He said, "Go to the desert, dig a hole, lower your head in it and say, 'Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Bāqir (peace be upon him) told me so and so.' Then cover up the hole with soil."⁴³

21. Spiritual master (sheikh)

There are two types of spiritual masters: general masters and particular masters.

Particular masters are those who have been specifically appointed and assigned by God to guide and direct the people to perfection. They are the Prophet and his specific successors.

General masters, however, are not specifically ordered to guide the people. Nevertheless, the general sense of this verse applies to them:

... Ask the people of the Remembrance if you know not. (16:43 and 21:7)

A wayfarer is never needless of the particular master, even if he achieves his desired destination. That is because even the destination that he has reached has certain rites and manners that should be observed, and these rites and manners are taught by none other than the particular master. No matter how high is the realm that a wayfarer achieves, it is still under the guardianship of the particular master.

Thus, the companionship of the particular master is a universal requirement for every stage of the journey. Even at the last stages of the journey, where the manifestations of the Divine Names and Essence occur, the particular master is present. What the great figures of spirituality have mentioned about showing devotion and courtesy toward the sheikh pertain to the particular master. Of course, one should also show devotion and courtesy to the general master, for he is a means and channel for the guidance of the particular master—each according to his level.

The common and straightforward meaning of the need for a master is that one cannot advance on the spiritual path without being guided by a master and following his instruction. Though this is certainly true, there is more to it. There is a higher level than this, which

is a crucial condition and an absolute requirement in spirituality: One must keep the company of the particular master in every step of the journey, so that he carries on the stages of the path in the right order. The importance of maintaining the right order shall be addressed later on.⁴⁴ The companionship of a general master is also recommended and preferable, especially for the beginners.⁴⁵

At the beginning of the path, the way to know and identify the particular master is similar to the way of acquiring the lesser faith, as mentioned above. ⁴⁶ Later on in the journey, the particular master will present and make himself known to the wayfarer.

How to know a general master

A general master, however, cannot be identified except through intimate association with him in public and private. A wayfarer should observe him and verify the perfection of faith in his limbs (outwardly) and in his soul (inwardly). One should be warned not to be deceived into following someone because of seeing him performing supernatural acts, discussing subtleties, revealing cosmic mysteries, disclosing personal secrets, or changing some of his circumstances. One can read minds, discover subtleties, walk on fire and water, teleport through the air and land, foretell the future, and do other similar acts, all at the stage of spiritual unveiling (al-mukāshafah al-rūhiyyah). But there is an infinitely long way from this stage to the final destination and the completion of the journey. 47 There are yet numerous stations and stages to pass. Many travelers have passed this stage but strayed later on, ending up with the thieves and devils of the path. This is how some disbelievers have been able to do certain miraculous acts. Even if one reaches the stage of manifestations of the Divine Attributes, it does not mean that the person is perfect. It is only the divine-and not spiritual-manifestations of the Essence (al-tajalliyyat al-dhatiyyah) that are indicative of perfection, because they exclusively occur for those who have reached the final destination of the journey.48

There is also another way to know who is a spiritual master or sheikh, which shall be mentioned later on.⁴⁹

22. Litany (wird)

Wird refers to the verbal invocations and litanies that open the gates of spirituality and help the wayfarer to overcome the obstacles, difficulties and obstructions on the path. One of the conditions of

litany is that it must be by the permission and prescription of one's master. Without the permission of the master, it is not permissible to take up a litany, for a litany is like a medicine: It can be beneficial for one person and harmful for another; at one time it can be an antidote and at another time it can be a poison; a certain amount of it could be a remedy and other amounts of it could be a malady. Sometimes, a litany would be harmful if combined with another litany, while it would be beneficial if taken alone. Some litanies could be hazardous for the reciter if they were uttered more or less than the prescribed number.

Of course, the masters of spirituality have given general sanctions for certain litanies, which would suffice for their permissibility for everyone.

Litanies can be meaningless or meaningful, each of which can be either specified or unspecified [in terms of number, time or other conditions]. This makes four combinations as the types of litany. However, meaningless litanies have no place in spirituality.⁵⁰

23, 24 and 25. Control of incoming thoughts (nafy alkhawātir), contemplation (fikr) and invocation (dhikr)

These are three crucial stages that one should complete in order to reach the destination of the spiritual journey. In fact, it is impossible to reach the destination without them. Meanwhile, there are many challenges and difficulties involved in accomplishing them. Not that the basic undertaking of these stages is difficult—although that is also the case—but what is meant here is that these stages are tremendously dangerous, for they involve the risk of eternal damnation and wretchedness.

Most of those who deviated from the straight path and perished did so in one of these three stages or in the two previous ones. However, the danger involved in these three stages is far greater and more intense than that of the previous two. This is because the danger associated with making an error in the previous stage (i.e. the stage of litany) is usually some damage to the body or certain outward difficulties. Likewise, the danger of making an error in the stage before that (i.e. the stage of the spiritual master) is that one might fail to reach the destination of the spiritual path altogether. The same is true if one does not follow the jurisprudence of the body or the spirit. But none of these necessarily results in eternal damnation and wretchedness, unless the error has to do with these last three stages.

You have surely heard about things like the worship of idols, cows, stars, fire, and animals. You have also heard about treating one's master or leader as one's god (ghuluww); cases of heresy, paganism and libertinism (ibāhah, i.e. having no commitment to the commands of religion); and claims of incarnation and unification (hulūl and ittihād). All of these have resulted and emerged from one of these three stages, as it shall be noted below, God-willing. The discussions that follow involve certain subtleties that can be grasped by the acute and discerning readers.

Concerning the control of incoming thoughts

As with the control or blocking of incoming thoughts (nafy alkliawātir), it consists of having the heart silent and under such control that it does not speak except with one's will and authorization. It is among the greatest purifiers of one's inner self, and one of the main factors that bring about the realization of true gnosis and the divine manifestations. However, it is a dangerous defile and a difficult obstacle to overcome. As a wayfarer determines to venture on it, incoming thoughts attack him from every side and disturb his spiritual state. When this happens, the wayfarer's duty is to be steadfast like a solid mountain, and to decapitate any thought that appears and makes a move in his mind with the sword of dhikr (invocation, remembrance of God, recollection). He should not show any lenience in this regard whatsoever, even against the most trivial thoughts, for every thought—no matter how small it is—would be a thorn in the feet of the heart; it cripples the heart from pursuing its quest.

Some pretenders and false claimants of spiritual mastership teach their disciples to go through this stage by employing *dhikr*. This method and practice—that they want to ward off incoming thoughts by *dhikr*—is their foremost error. Controlling incoming thoughts is a difficult task which a wayfarer cannot achieve except through a long period of spiritual combat and struggle.

The masters of spirituality have called this stage an incurable malady. The remembrance and *dhikr* of God is like looking at the Beloved and His beauty from a distance, which is only permitted to those who have completely closed their eyes to others. That is because the Beloved is $ghay\bar{u}r$ (protectively jealous), ⁵² and His ghayrah (protective jealousy) does not allow an eye that has seen Him to look at anything else. Thus, should an eye turn its look away from Him toward something else, He will blind that eye. It is an act of disre-

spect and derision if a lover goes back and forth between the states of *dhikr* and heedlessness. In such a case, the Beloved would slap the wayfarer on the neck, in such a way that his hat would fall along with his head.

There is a sacred tradition where God says:

...I am the intimate companion (jalīs, sitting companion) of one who remembers Me.⁵³

And He says in the Quran:

Whoever turneth a blind eye to the remembrance of the All-Merciful, to him We assign a devil who becometh his companion. (43:36)

If someone withdraws from the company of the Beloved and sits with Satan, do you think that the Beloved would admit such a person to his proximity? Moreover, Satan is impure and abominable. Hence, if somewhere is made impure by the presence of Satan, how can it host the All-Merciful?

How can you enjoy hearing her speech? With the voice of others your ears are replete.

Even the mere removal and control of incoming thoughts is not sufficient for engaging in *dhikr*. The removal of incoming thoughts is like cleaning up the house, which by itself is not sufficient to make the place ready for the advent of the Beloved. In addition to this cleaning, the house should be furnished, adorned and perfumed.⁵⁴

These eyes have looked at other than her; Wash them with tears, for they're not neat.55

There is only one type of *dhikr* that can be practiced when one is at the stage of control of incoming thoughts: a *dhikr* that is not intended as a *dhikr* (remembrance of God), but only as a means to repel Satan. This is the case of a person who utters the name of his Be-

loved in order to drive the outsiders away from his home, so that he may then invite his Beloved. He calls the name of his Beloved only to threaten and deter the outsiders, not to see or unite with Him just yet. The procedure for this method is as follows: When one is engaged in controlling incoming thoughts, sometimes a thought might come to the mind in such a way that one finds it difficult to repel. That is when he may engage in *dhikr* in order to drive off that thought. This has been mentioned in the following verse:

Truly those who are self-restrained, when a circumambulating group [or insinuation] of Satan troubleth them, remember, and thereby they perceive. (7:201)

The way of the experts of this field and those who have reached the destination of the spiritual journey is that a beginner should first control his incoming thoughts and *then* engage in *dhikr*. ⁵⁶

The control of incoming thoughts is to be achieved in four stages:

I. The wayfarer should start with focusing on something tangible such as a piece of rock or some other object. It is also permissible—even commendable—to use a three-dimensional figure or representation of one of the Names of God. 57 The person should stare at the object without blinking, to the extent possible. 58 He should focus all of his outer and inner powers and faculties toward that object. He should persist with this practice for a while—preferably forty days or even more.

There are three litanies to be observed during this period:

- 1. Isti 'ādhah (seeking refuge in God, i.e. "I seek refuge in God").
- Istighfār (asking forgiveness from God, i.e. "I ask God for forgiveness"). These two litanies are unspecified (iṭlāqi), meaning that it is up to the person to decide about their number and time.⁵⁹
- 3. Yā Facāl (O All-Active, O All-Doer), which is specified to either its undifferentiated (mujmal) number or to its differentiated (mufaṣṣal) number. The differentiated number is to be observed after the obligatory Morning Prayer, and the undifferentiated number is to be observed after the obligatory Night Prayer, both in a state of seclusion (khalwah).
- II. Once the person has done the above for some period of time and has achieved a level of control over incoming thoughts, he should

direct his undivided attention to his physical heart (which is in the shape of a pine cone and situated in the left side of the chest). He must completely concentrate on it, be heedful of it at all times, and have no other thought or imagination. Should some thought attack him and disturb his mind, he should imagine the face of his general master. This is an appropriate practice for an invoker since the general master is the source [and prescriber] of invocation. This practice is definitely effective, and it is devoid of certain possible dangers [that may come up in other practices].

If that does not work, the person should make three forceful exhalations, as if he wants to expel something from his nose. This is how one can discharge and empty himself and thus be able to concentrate.

If he is distracted by the same thought again, he should discharge himself again as explained, and ask for forgiveness three times by the following formula:

I ask God for forgiveness for everything that is detested by God in terms of speech, act, thought, hearing and sight. And there is no movement and no power save by God.

This formula is ameans of seeking refuge in God and asking forgiveness from Him. It is important that the person makes his heart conform to his tongue when he utters this formula.

He should also invoke the name Yā Fa^{cc}āl (O All-Active, O All-Doer) in his heart by paying attention to its meaning. Furthermore, he should put his hand on his heart and recite the following formula seven times:

Glorified is God, the Sovereign, the Sacrosanct, the All-Creator, the All-Active. "If He will, He can put you away and bring a new creation & And that is not a hard thing for God" (14:19-20 and 35:16-17).

If the above procedure does not stop the thoughts, then the person should contemplate on the meaning of this expression:

لَامَوْجُودَ إِلَّاللهُ.

There is no being but God.

If the disturbance occurs again, he should say *Allāh* a few times with great exertion (or aloud, as in another version of the manuscript). In doing so, the person must extend and prolong the pronunciation of the middle ā. He should continue with this as long as he does not feel bored or weary, and should stop whenever he sees signs of boredom and tedium in himself. This practice [of focusing on the heart] is to be continued until the person achieves a state of trance [i.e. a state of being completely detached from himself and others, and having no preoccupation except his Beloved].

There are two litanies to be observed at this stage: <code>istighfār</code> (asking God for forgiveness), and <code>Yā Faccāl</code> (O All-Active, O All-Doer). Both of them are specified: The first one is to be recited at dawn by its <code>mujmal</code> (undifferentiated) number, while the second one is to be recited after the obligatory Morning Prayer by its <code>mujmal</code> number, and after the obligatory Night Prayer by its <code>mufaṣṣal</code> (differentiated) number. During the first two stages of controlling incoming thoughts, one should also recite the name <code>Yā Bāsit</code> (O Expander) frequently. It is preferable to recite this every night by its <code>mufaṣṣal</code> number. ⁶³

By persisting with the above procedure, the wayfarer will gain some capacity for *dhikr* and some control over incoming thoughts.

- III. After that, the person may use the initial elements of *dhikr* in order to deflect any remaining thoughts. What is meant by the initial elements of *dhikr* is to summon the image of the particular master to one's mind, or to visualize the written form of the Names of God in one's mind—as appropriate with the three spiritual states [of the litanies mentioned above], and without paying attention to their meanings.⁶⁴
- IV. After further advancement on the path, the person may direct his attention to the spiritual light of the particular master and engage in meaningful non-verbal dhikr in order to completely remove all incoming thoughts.⁶⁵

At times, there might be some thought or insinuation that approaches the heart like a thief. However, this should disappear as one enters the following two stages of *dhikr* and *fikr* (contemplation), by the will of God.

The danger at this stage is that one could fall into the worship of idols, stars or objects. Paying attention to something brings about

intimacy and love for that thing. Therefore, if the person does not pass this stage, he will end up worshipping that object of attention.

Concerning dhikr

Once the wayfarer has gained control of his heart and has purified it of the impurities of incoming thoughts, he should step into the field of *dhikr* (invocation, remembrance of God, being present). The most crucial condition at this stage is to observe the order of things. If the wayfarer does not follow the proper order, he will not be able to continue with his journey. Not only that, but he will be afflicted by tremendous disasters. The reality of invocation lies in its initial elements and preliminaries, because what is sought after is hidden in what is being remembered and invoked.⁶⁶

The main objective behind these initial elements and preliminaries is to prepare the grounds for invocation, just like how one would prepare and adorn his house for a special guest. Thus, it is absolutely necessary for the masters to teach the order of steps and preliminaries to the seekers of the path, and for the latter to observe and abide by them.⁶⁷

Some masters of spirituality instruct the beginners to first summon the spiritual light of the particular master—which is the real walī (saint, guardian)—and then teach them to engage in meaningless verbal invocations. I, however, do not approve of this order. That is because the whole purpose of having a sequential order of steps is to ascend with moderation, in order to avoid the wrath and ghayrah (protective jealousy) of the Beloved—which would be a danger if the heart becomes heedless of Him, and inclines toward the means and preliminaries of dhikr instead.

Hence, one should start with a step where the light of the Divine Essence is most hidden, and the manifestation of His *ghayrah* is least imminent. A *walī* (saint; i.e. the particular master) has a far greater share of that light compared to a meaningless verbal invocation. Therefore, one should begin the stage of invocation by meaningless verbal invocations of the Names of God. ⁶⁸

This stage requires a proficient master, because these Names comprise the spirituality of their meanings and light of the Named (i.e. the Beloved) within them. The light and spirituality of these Names have a direct effect on the person becoming a manifestation of spirituality. That is, paying attention to these Names and persisting in this practice will bring about the light and spirituality of these Names to the invoker, and enhance his spiritual states.

Any defect or shortcoming by the wayfarer at this stage or in the previous stages could result in his delusion. He might experience the complete manifestation of a Name in himself and thus be content with that and forget about the other manifestations. This would lead him into fatal pitfalls such as libertinism (*ibāḥah*), suspension (*ta tīl*), despair [in God's infinite mercy], insanity, Pharaohship and divulgence (*idhā'ah*).⁶⁹

The reason for this is that when an unprepared novice focuses on Names that inspire love and hope, he may become excessively optimistic and libertine. On the contrary, focusing on Names that have an aspect of grandeur could produce Pharaohship in him. These Names could also make him too obsessed with himself, and lead him to things like excess fear, despair and suspension of religions duties.⁷⁰

Moreover, an unprepared novice does not have the capacity to tolerate certain Names and manifestations. The lights of these Names either do not manifest for him, or if they do, he could be rendered insane or become afflicted with severe illnesses and disorders. Examples of such Names are the great, greater and greatest invocations.

Once the wayfarer has completed the preliminary stages [such as the control of incoming thoughts], he should make the intention and determination to embark on the stage of invocation. In doing so, he should start with a specific invocation and formula that best suits him, as instructed by his master. The initial invocations that one engages in should be among the lesser invocations; he should take them up in order and advance step by step.⁷²

Categories of invocation (dhikr)

There are different categories of invocation (*dhikr*): verbal (*khayālī*),⁷³ non-verbal (*khafiyy*), secret (*sirr*), and essential (*dhātī*).

Verbal invocation is classified into meaningless (*qālabī*) and meaningful (*nafsī*), each of which can be either affirmative (*ithbātī*) or subsistent (*thabtī*), and either unified (*jam ī*) or dispersed (*bastī*).⁷⁴

Non-verbal invocation can also be either meaningless or meaningful.⁷⁵ Hence, here is a list of various degrees and stages of invocation in an ascending order:

 Affirmative unified meaningless verbal invocation. This is the initial stage of invocation, because the divine light that manifests through meaningless invocations is less intense compared to meaningful invocations. Therefore, the risk of being struck by the *ghayrah* (protective jealousy) of the Beloved is least in this type of invocation. Moreover, it is easier to focus and develop a permanent state of concentration in a unified invocation than in a dispersed invocation.⁷⁶ Finally, affirmation is a step before subsistence.

- 2. Subsistent unified meaningless verbal invocation.
- 3. Affirmative dispersed meaningless verbal invocation.
- 4. Subsistent dispersed meaningless verbal invocation.
- 5. Affirmative unified meaningful verbal invocation.
- 6. Subsistent unified meaningful verbal invocation.
- 7. Affirmative dispersed meaningful verbal invocation.
- 8. Subsistent dispersed meaningful verbal invocation.
- Meaningful non-verbal invocation. As with meaningless nonverbal invocation, there is no need for it once the person has passed the previous eight stages.
- 10. Secret invocation.

In dispersed invocation, the dispersion of the invocation should return to the heart in the end. In fact, it is very appropriate to *start* the dispersion from the heart as well, and for certain invocations it is necessary to do so. ⁷⁸

These ten stages of invocation are like the steps of a ladder that should be climbed consecutively and in a systematic manner. Of course, a competent wayfarer who has strong intellectual and practical capabilities may be able to skip and fly over some steps. Nonetheless, it is safer to carry on the journey gradually and stepwise. As long as a wayfarer has not completed all of the above stages, he should not engage in the great, the greater and the greatest invocations, unless he is very strong and only if his master deems it appropriate. Otherwise, these invocations could pose a real danger to him and could prevent him from continuing his journey. Even when the wayfarer has completed the above stages, the spiritual master may order him to repeat some of them and journey further in invocations, according to his condition.

Essential invocation

When the wayfarer finishes the above stages, he should start the essential invocation (al-dhikr al-dhātī). The essential invocation is to pay attention to God, All-Mighty He is, without any voice or letter, and unconditioned by any specific Attribute in any language. [In

other words, essential invocation has no language as its medium, nor does it involve any mental conception. It consists of a pure attention and connection to Absolute Existence without any condition, even without realizing one's attention.] The person should not allow the properties of any originated or limited being—such as substance, accident or body—to disturb him.

If the person is unable to invoke God without any image or attribute, he should imagine Him with the attribute of an infinite light,⁷⁹ based on the narration,

رَأَيْتُ رَبِي نُورَانِيّاً.

I saw my Lord luminous.80

Should he be unable to conceive infinity, he must get as close to it as he can. Then he should advance to a higher level of light at every moment by denying the image that he just conceived the previous moment. Indeed, the essential invocation is a splendid type of invocation.

The great invocation

Once the wayfarer has mastered all of these stages, he should engage in the great invocation (*al-dhikr al-kabīr*), which consists of a negation and a compound affirmation.⁸¹

Lā ilāha illā Allāh ("There is no god but God") is called the "invocation of negation and compound affirmation"; lā ilāha illā hū and lā huwa illā hū ("There is no god but Him" and "There is no he but Him") are called the "invocation of negation and simple affirmation"; Allāhis called the greater invocation (al-dhikr al-akbar).

Inward meaningful invocation

From this stage on [i.e. the stage of the great invocation: $l\bar{a}$ $ill\bar{a}ha$ $ill\bar{a}$ $All\bar{a}h$], there is no point in meaningless invocations anymore. Instead, invocation is to be done meaningfully (nafsī). This is a magnificent way of invoking God; the masters of spirituality have many secrets with regard to it; and there are numerous ways of doing it.

Three methods for the great invocation

It is best if the wayfarer starts the great invocation by the "tidal" method (jazr wa madd), then continues with the "quadratic" method

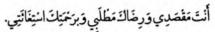
(tarabbu °), and finishes with a method that the later mystics have named, "the confluence of the two seas" (majnua al-baḥrayn). The mystics have recommended the above order, but I find it more appropriate if the majma al-baḥrayn method is done before the tarabbu method.

There are a set of conditions that one must observe when making invocation:

- 1. Holding one's breath [on each unit of *dhikr*, or as much as possible—without being burdensome].
- 2. Focusing on the physical heart.
- 3. Imagining the emergence of every letter from the tongue and the heart. 44
- 4. Having an empty stomach when making invocation.
- 5. Gradually adding to the number of times an invocation is repeated.
- 6. Starting with bism Allāh ("In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate").
- 7. Facing the qiblah (Mecca).
- 8. Having the eyes shut, unless one is not in seclusion.
- 9. Sitting cross-legged. In the majma albaḥrayn method, one should sit cross-legged with the two hands extending out to the knees [as in Yoga and other types of meditation].
- 10. Avoiding the presence of those who are not into spirituality, women [who are not related (maḥram) according to the Islamic law], laymen, and anyone who is deficient in terms of reason.

It is also appropriate to have the tongue touch the palate when saying lā ilāha illā Allāh, and to make invocation at nights, at dawn, or after the obligatory prayers.

When making invocation, one must be attentive of God's Essence and identity [i.e. Absolute Existence and Presence, the Infinite]. When the person wants to stop the invocation, he should address God by the following supplication with his tongue and heart:



Thou art my end, Thy pleasure is what I seek, and I plead with Thy mercy for help.

The greater invocation

After that, the person would engage in the greater invocation (aldhikr al-akbar, i.e. Allāh), first as a non-verbal invocation (khafiyy) and then as a secret one (sirr). It is apt to begin this invocation with a vocative particle (i.e. $Y\bar{a}$ Allāh O God) and then drop the particle later on (i.e. only utter Allāh). It is also recommended to extend and protract the middle \bar{a} in Allāh

The greatest invocation

Then the person should move on to the greatest invocation (al-dhikr al-a 'zam, i.e. lā ilāha illā hū. "There is no god but Him," or lā huwā illā hū. "There is no he but Him"). This invocation is an invocation of negation and simple affirmation [as opposed to the great invocation: lā ilāha illā Allāh, which is an invocation of negation and compound affirmation], and it is the final stage of invocation.

All of these stages and degrees of invocation should be accompanied by the essential invocation. Even if one ascends the ladder of the stages and degrees of invocation to the top, he should realize that the Invoked One—God—is a creditor whose debt can never be paid off. May God help us to reach the destination.

A great mystic said,

When God wills to conduct the affairs of a servant, He opens to him the gate of [His] remembrance (dhikr), and then the gate of [His] proximity. Next, He seats him on the chair of unity (tawhīd), and then He lifts up the veils from before him. Then He ushers him into the house of singularity (fardāniyyah), and then He unveils [His] grandeur (kibriyā¹) for him. Thereby, the servant becomes annihilated and cleared from the claims of his naſs (soul, self, ego).⁸⁵

The requirements of invocation

Now that you have learned about the stages of invocation, you have to know about five requirements that should be observed during the time that one is engaged in invocation:

1. The imaginal conception of the name of the particular master

When engaged in verbal invocations, one should imagine and visualize the name of the particular master, who is the possessor of the Greatest Guardianship (al-wilāyat al-kubrá). His name should be conceived and visualized as a dhikr (a means of invocation and remembrance).⁸⁶

In unified invocation (*jam ^ci*), the name of the particular master should be visualized at a lower position in the heart than the position of invocation [i.e. lower than God's Name]. It can also be visualized toward the bottom of the chest, where it would be outside and lower than the heart. The master's name must be imagined and visualized [only] as a means of seeking proximity to the Invoked One [God]. It is recommended to conceive the name of the Messenger first and then the name of his successor.⁸⁷

In dispersed invocation (basti), the name of the particular master should be visualized at the right side of the chest, between the right breast and the right arm. When the wayfarer goes beyond the stage of meaningless invocation, he should constantly observe and be attentive to the luminous apparitions and imaginal forms of the Messenger and the particular master at the aforementioned station [the right side of the chest, between the right breast and the right arm]. They must be observed in a state of showing modesty to the Invoked One, and as a means of intercession for the invoker.)

It is also suitable and recommended to visualize the general master in any type of invocation. He should be visualized at a small distance outside the body toward the left, facing the form of invocation while showing modesty toward it and interceding for the invoker. 89

The mystics have not elaborated further on these two conceptions and visualizations [i.e. the visualizations of the particular and general masters]. If what they mean is that these two visualizations are among the required or recommended conditions of invocation—meaning that one should constantly observe them while engaged in invocation—then that would be against the concentration of one's attention and avoidance of its dispersion. That would certainly pre-

vent one from invocation, because he would not be able to focus on unity. That is why my spiritual master strictly prohibited me from this practice. Instead, he used to say, "The invoker should make these conceptions and visualizations only at the beginning and the end of invocation, as well as at the beginning of the day and at the beginning of the night." Paying attention to the master's name and its meaning are to be practiced before one enters the stages of *dhikr*. That would be helpful and would increase one's love and devotion. In the stage of the control of the night.

By persisting on this practice [of paying attention to the particular master], the person will at some point realize the reality of the Messenger and his successor. It is also possible to test the credibility of the general master by this method. However, that would be a subtle identification, and it is not possible to elaborate on it. This is not advisable for one who has not reached the utmost degree of *dhikr*, because the truth may appear to him as falsehood or vice versa, and consequently he could be deceived and led astray.⁹²

2. Verbal invocation (wird)

Another practice that should be observed during invocation is verbal invocation. The experts of spirituality do not use the title "invocation" (dhikr) for verbal invocation, but they call it "litany" (wird). Further, they have no regard for meaningless litanies whatsoever. Whenever they talk about litany, what they mean is meaningful litany.

There are many litanies that can be practiced during the stage of invocation, but the procedure that I present here would be sufficient for a seeker of the truth:⁹³

- It is best to engage in litany in the last hours of the night (saḥar),⁹⁴ after the obligatory Morning Prayer (fajr), and after the obligatory Night Prayer (fishā²).
- 2. Each of the following Divine Names should be recited a thousand times after each of the obligatory Morning and Night Prayers: Muḥīṭ[un] (All-Encompassing), Yā Nūr (O Light) and Yā Quddūs (O Sacrosanct). The same goes with the litany of "negation and compound affirmation" and the litany of "negation and simple affirmation" [i.e. lā ilāha illā Allālī "There is no god but God," and lā ilāha illā hūī. "There is no god but Him" or lā huwā illā hūī. "There is no he but Him"].

- 3. It is recommended to recite the following two litanies in night time: Muḥammadun Rasūl-u-llāh ("Muḥammad is the Messenger of God"), and Yā ʿAlī (O ʿAlī) or ʿAlī (without the vocative particle Yā). 95
- 4. Chapter 114 (al-Tawhid) is an excellent litany to recite one thousand times every night.
- 5. One should not neglect the following formula:

In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate.

O God, I ask Thee by Thy Name which is hidden, reserved, benign, descender, sacred, pure and purifier.

O Aeon (dahr), O All-Aeon (Dayhūr), O True Aeon (Dayhār). O Pre-eternity (azal), O Post-eternity (abad). O He Who begetteth not, nor was begotten. O He Who has always been.

O He, O He, O He. O One that there is no god but Him. O One that there is no he but Him. O One that no one knows Him except Him. O One that no one knows where He is except Him.

يَاكَانِنْ يَاكَيْنَانُ، يَا رُوحُ، يَاكَانِناً قَبَلَ كُلِّ كَوْنٍ، يَاكَانِناً بَعْدَكُلِّ كَوْنٍ، يَامُكُونِاً لِكُلِّ كَوْنٍ، آهِيَاً شَرَاهِيَاً، يَا مُجَلِّيَ عَظَانِمِ الْأُمُورِ، سُجُمَانَكَ عَلَى حِلْمِكَ بَعْدَ عِلْمِكَ، سُجُمَانَكَ عَلَى عَفُوكَ بَعْدَ قُدْرَتْكَ.

O Being, O Absolute Being. O pleasant [or O respite, or O spirit]. O One Who has been before every being. O One Who shall be after every being. O One Who gives being to every being. "I am that I am" (āniyyan sharāhiyyan).97

O One Who removes major calamities. Glorified Thou art for Thy tolerance despite Thy knowledge. Glorified Thou art

for Thy pardon despite Thy power.

(فَإِنْ تُوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ ثُوَكَلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ)، (لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ الشَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ). اللهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ بِعَدَدِكُلِ شَيْءٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَ آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَيدُ مَجِيدٌ.

"Now, if they turn away, say, 'God sufficeth me; there is no god but Him; in Him I have put my trust; and He is the Lord of the Magnificent Throne'" (9:129).

"There is nothing as His likeness; and He is the Allhearing, the All-seeing" (42:11).

O God, send peace upon Muḥammad and Muḥammad's family by the number of everything, as Thou sent peace upon Abraham and Abraham's family; truly Thou art All-Laudable, All-Glorious.

3. Supplication and orison (munājāh)

The best supplications and orisons are the ones found in al-Ṣaḥīfah al-ʿAlawiyyah and al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah [or the supplications and orisons of Imāms ʿAlī and Sajjād in general].

4. Contemplation (fikr)

This is one of the most crucial conditions of invocation. When the wayfarer is not actively engaged in invocation, he should be constantly in state of contemplation—as much as possible.

In the initial stages of contemplation, one should reflect upon the signs of God's power, compassion, mercy and magnificence. One must also think about what his end will be, the results of his actions, what will happen to him after death, and similar matters as discussed in ethical books. Moreover, one has to contemplate upon the wisdoms and subtle details associated with in the injunctions of God's Messenger and his successors, as well as their mercy, their kindness, and their care and effort to improve the well-being of the people in the Hereafter and in this world.

In the intermediate and final stages of contemplation, one should constantly ponder upon his connection with his Creator. That is to observe one's createdness, servitude and humbleness with respect to his Creator. More generally, one should reflect upon the relation between every creature and the Single Creator. It is also important to think about one's relation with God's Messenger and his successors,

When one reflects upon how every being relates to the same Source, the person develops a feeling of kindness and compassion toward every being. A person of knowledge and insight would always be in charge of his thoughts, and can determine where his thoughts take him. The important point is not to be devoid of contemplation, because:

The best worship is continued contemplation upon God and His power.⁹⁸

5. Perseverance with all litanies and invocations

One should persist and persevere in practicing the litanies and invocations so that their results may manifest and actualize. Observing a litany or invocation for less than forty days would not have much effect, except for certain litanies that have been specifically prescribed as such.⁹⁹

At certain stages of the path, one may have to observe a practice for multiple forty-day periods, which is called a "dwelling" (iqāmah). Further, it is greatly emphasized that at all times one should reduce his indulgence in pleasures, fatty foods, meat, and delicious foods [i.e. eating for pleasure].

The above was a set of the guidelines and procedure on how to go about the spiritual journey.





PART III Final Remarks





Chapter 7

The Results of the Spiritual Journey

A wayfarer will realize the results and blessings of his spiritual journey himself. Among these results is the enlightenment of the heart. This inner light first appears in the shape of a lamp; then it turns into a flame; then it turns into a star; then it becomes like the moon; then it becomes like the sun; then it fades away and becomes colorless and shapeless. Often it takes the form of a flash or lightning, and sometimes it is like a niche [of light] or a chandelier. The last two semblances usually occur as a result of some act or gnosis, while the previous forms appear as a result of invocation.¹

Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him) referred to the first form of light [as a lamp] when he discussed the various types of hearts:

... There is a heart which is luminous and purged.

Then he was asked, "What do you mean by luminous?" He replied,

It is as if there is a lamp in it... And the luminous heart is the heart of a believer.²

Some other forms of this light have been referred to by Imām Alī (peace be upon him) in the following narration:

He has revived his intellect [or heart] and killed his [base] soul, such that what was thick in him thinned [i.e. his body], what was hard in him softened [i.e. his heart, or his temperament], and a very bright light glittered for him.³

In fact, one of the hidden meanings of verse 24:35 would be a description of these stages.

الله فُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ مَثَلُ فُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحُ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةِ الزُجَاجَةَ كَأَنْهَا كُوَكَبُ دُرِيُّ يُوفَدُ مِن شَّجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيُّونَةٍ لَا شَرَقِيَةٍ وَلا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيِّهَا فِي ، وَلَوْلَرَ تُمْسَلهُ تَارُ فُورُ عَلَى نُورِ يَهْدِي اللهُ لِنُورِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَشْرِبُ اللهُ الأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ وَاللهَ بِكُلِ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمُ هُ فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ اللهُ أَن تُرفَعَ وَيُذَكَرَ فِيهَا اللهُ لُيسَجْحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالنَّدُو وَ الآصَالِ هورِ جَالُ لا تُلهِيمِمْ يَحَارَةُ وَلاَ بَيْعُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللهِ...

God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The likeness of His Light is as a niche wherein is a lamp; the lamp is in a glass; the glass as it were a glittering star; [the lamp is] kindled from a Blessed Tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil well-nigh would glow [of itself], though no fire hath touched it; light upon light; God guideth to His Light whom He will. And God draweth similitudes for the people, and God is All-Knowing of all things In houses that God hath allowed to be raised up, and His Name to be remembered therein. Therein glorify Him in the mornings and the evenings men whom no trade or sale distracteth from the remembrance of God... (24:35-37)

Here, the person becomes a niche, in which there is a glass called the heart. In that glass there is a lamp which is the inner light discussed above. When this light pervades the heart, the heart becomes like a glittering star that has been kindled. The light of the blessed and auspicious tree refers to the light and spirituality involved in the remembrance of God (*dhikr*), and that is neither attained from the East nor from the West, for it is an inward and spiritual light. "If no fire toucheth it" means if the person does not become heedless of God's remembrance, because heedlessness makes Satan to be one's peer and companion, and Satan is made of fire.

وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقَيِّضُ لَهُ شَيْطَاناً فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Whoever turneth a blind eye to the remembrance of the All-Merciful, to him We assign a devil who becometh his companion. (43:36)

"Light upon light" means that this inner light will keep increasing until all of the heart turns into light. This glass [i.e. the heart] is "in houses that God hath allowed to be raised up, and His Name to be remembered therein."

Then the verse describes the appearance and realization of this light as: "Therein glorify Him in the mornings and the evenings men whom no trade or sale distracteth from the remembrance of God..."

Among the other results of spiritual wayfaring is the sound of the heart. In the initial stages of the path, a sound like that of a pigeon or dove is heard from the heart. Later, its sound will be like the sound of a bead that is rolled in a tub. Then it turns into a buzzing sound like that of a fly that is trapped in a silk web. But then the heart becomes silent and its invocation is entrusted to the spirit.





Chapter 8

The Author's Method of Invocation

I shall end this noble treatise by a brief account of my method of invocation.

When I determined to embark on the spiritual path, take up the greater and the greatest struggles, and enter the valley of invocation, I first resolved to repent from everything that I used to do, and forsook my habits and customs. I took up invocation in seclusion for forty-day cycles (sing. arba 'in), and went on forty cycles of these arba 'ins'

In terms of verbal invocations (al-dhikr al-khayālī), my spiritual master taught me the Divine Name al-Ḥayy (the All-Living), which he had obtained from the following verse:

He is the All-Living One (*al-Ḥayy*); there is no god but He. So call unto Him, with your religion being sincerely for Him. All praise belongeth to God, the Lord of all beings. (40:65)

In this verse, God has mentioned the Name al-Ḥayy as a preparation for sincerity, and as a path toward His praise. This invocation has such a light and spirituality that it matches the spiritual makeup and constitution of everyone. It is safe from every danger, and would revive the dead hearts. Most narrations concerning the Greatest Name (al-ism al-a 'zam') include al-Ḥayy among them, as reported in the book, Muhaj al-da 'awāt. Thus, it is as if this Name is the Greatest Name of God.

The Name consists of the two letters, $h\bar{a}^2$ and $y\bar{a}^2$. The first letter brings about intimacy and connection, and the second letter represents forbearance, patience, support and success.

If one of the Names of God consists of the first letter $(\hbar \bar{a})$, then that Name would countervail the effects of the fire of Satan, because this letter repulses heat. If a Name comprises the second letter $(y\bar{a})$, then it would have the effect of guidance and the unveiling of secrets, as discussed in the science of numbers.⁴

The added "al-" (alif and $l\bar{a}m$) is so that the heart may take on the qualities of the prophets and the attributes of the saints, and that it may have fortitude in action. $L\bar{a}m$ is an essential letter of the Pen (qalam) that inscribes the secrets.⁵

I observed this invocation by various methods for several forty-day cycles. Then I took up other invocations [each for forty days]. For every forty-day cycle, I took a bath of repentance (ghusl altawbah) and quitted one of the pleasures and cravings of my nafs (soul, self), giving it up forever.

Moreover, each day I would select one of my masters [i.e. one of the fourteen Infallibles] and would recite his ziyārah (pilgrimage, calling on to a saintly spirit and visiting it from far). I used a ziyārah of my choice for this purpose, and started the round of ziyārah from a Saturday, as I found a narration in this regard. I would further perform two units of prayer and present it to the sacred spirit of that Imām as a means of solicitation (tawassul) to him.

On Fridays, I used to entreat and appeal to the Guardian of the Time (walī al- aṣr), and would recite the ziyārah and supplications that have been prescribed as means of solicitation to him on Fridays. On Fridays I would also recite the şalawāt (sending peace and blessing upon the Prophet Muḥammad and his family) one thousand times, as recommended in the narrations.

I had two types of litany in that period [the initial stages of the path]:

The first type was my daily duties, which were as follows:

- 1. Al-Ḥaqq("the Truth"): a hundred times in the last hours of the night (saḥar), after having performed two units of prayers and while raising my hands toward the heaven.
- 2. The following litany, forty times between supererogatory and obligatory prayers:

يَاحَيُّ يَاقَيْومُ، يَامَنُ لَا إِلَّهَ إِلَّاأَنْتَ، برَحْمَتِكَ اسْتَغِيثُ.

O All-Living, O Upright, O One that there is no god but Thee, I plead with Thy mercy for help.

- 3. Yā Aḥadu yā Ṣamad ("O One, O Independent"): after the five obligatory prayers, either by its undifferentiated (mujmal) number of 169, or by its differentiated (mufaṣṣal) number of 619.
- 4. Yā 'Alī ("O 'Alī"): while intending Imām 'Alī, who is the walī (guardian, i.e. the particular master), recited in the last hours of the night (saḥar) or after the obligatory Morning Prayer, by its mujmal number of 121.8
- 5. Yā Qarīb ("O Near"): every day by its mujmal number of 323.
- 6. The verses of Sovereignty (*mulk*): twenty-two times after the obligatory Morning Prayer.⁹
- 7. *Allāh* in the last hours of the night, by its great (*kabīr*) *abjad* number [of 66] if possible. ¹⁰
- 8. Yā Nīru yā Qudd īs ("O Light, O Sacrosanct"): in the last hours of the night, by its mujmal number of 448.

The second type was the litanies that I took up and completed through this stage, in the following order:

1. The following litany for forty days by its *mujmal* number of 2500:

My Lord, truly adversity has afflicted me, and Thou art the Most Merciful of all merciful.¹¹

2. The following litany for forty days by its *mujmal* number of 2386:

O, there is no god but Thee; glory be to Thee; truly I have been among the wrongdoers. 12

- 3. Yā Hādī ("O Guide"): for forty days, recited 5000 times during the day and 100 times at the end of the day.
- 4. Yā Hādī al-muḍillīn, yā Fattāḥ ("O Guide of the misguided, O Deliverer"): for eighteen days, 8799 times a day.
- 5. Yā Baṣīr ("O All-Seeing"): for forty nights, each night 8825 times.

- 6. Yā ʿAlī (O All-Supreme, as one of God's Names): for forty days, recited 1330 times after each obligatory prayer. If possible, one should try to perform ghusl (ritual bath) every day during these forty days.
- 7. Āyat al-Kursī (the Throne Verse, 2:255): recited after every obligatory prayer during the forty-day periods of the next series of the six litanies [12 forty-day cycles in total].
- 8. Each of the following litanies, recited in the last hours of the night (saḥar), for a thousand times through two forty-day periods: 13
 - a. Lā ilāha illā Allāh ("There is no god but God"), which is the litany of negation and compound affirmation [the great invocation].
 - b. Lā ilāha illā hū ("There is no god but Him") or lā huwā illā hū ("There is no he but Him"), which are the litanies of negation and simple affirmation [the greatest invocation].
 - c. Allāh
 - d. Hū.
 - e. Chapter 112 (al-Tawḥīd).
 - f. Chapter 87 (al-A la).
- Yā Subbūḥu yā Quddūs ("O Glorified, O Sacrosanct"): for six forty-day periods, 2670 times a day. The conditions for this litany are to perform ghusl (ritual bath) every day if possible, and to practice silence and hunger.
- 10. Yā Ḥannānu yā Mannān ("O All-Affectionate, O All-Munificent"): 1200 times per day for 108 days. The condition for this litany is to abstain from eating animal products during this period, even from forty days before.
- 11. Yā Dayyān ("O Retributer"): for 70 days, each day 5000 times.
- 12. Yā Kabīr ("O All-Great"): 1466 times per day (24 hours, including nights), for three forty-day cycles. I abstained from animal products in the last forty-day cycle, and recited the litany as much as possible. It is best if it can be recited 70,000 times a day during the last cycle.
- 13. Yā Nūr ("O Light"): for forty-nine days, each day recited by its great (kabīr) abjad number [of 267], after reciting Chapter 24 (al-Nūr) seven times. I did the same at nights but without reciting Chapter 24. I started the forty-nine days from a Saturday.

- 14. Yā Ḥayyu yā Qayyūm ("O All-Living, O Upright"): 3716 times between dawn and sunrise, or between sunrise and noon, for 180 days.
- 15. Yā Muhaymin ("O Predominant"): 1040 times a day for forty days or for two forty-day cycles, while having performed ghusl and before talking [i.e. without talking between the ghusl and the invocation].
- 16. Allāh [the greater invocation]: for forty days, as much as possible, and at any suitable time. The conditions for this litany are to fast the forty days and avoid sleeping unless one falls asleep involuntarily. Also, one should utter the initial letter "A" (hamzah) clearly, and should stop at the last letter "h" ($h\bar{a}$). One must continue practicing this litany after the forty days.

That is how I practiced litany. For some of the above litanies, it is possible to combine between two or more of them during the same forty-day period. ¹⁶ One can do so even if one of the litanies is prescribed for a longer period than the other one, in which case the longer litany would continue after the completion of the shorter one. It is also permissible to continue a litany for a longer period of time [in forty-day units].

The following conditions should also be observed for all of the above litanies of the second type:

- 1. Seclusion.
- 2. Aromatization.
- 3. Avoiding the consumption of malodorous vegetables.
- 4. Starting and ending the litany [every day] with the following formula of sending peace upon the Prophet and his family (salawāt):

اللَهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى المُصطَفَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَالْرَبَّضَى عَلِي وَالْبَتُولِ فَاطِمَةً وَالسِّبَطَيْنِ الْحَسَنِ وَالْحُسَيْنِ، وَ صَلِّ عَلَى ذَيْنِ الْبِبَادِ عَلِي وَالْبَافِرِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَالصَّادِقِ جَعْفَرٍ وَالْكَاظِمِ مُوسَى وَالرِّضَاعَلِي وَالتَّقِيْ مُحَمَّدٍ وَالنَّقِيْ عَلِيّ وَالزَّكِيِّ الْمَسْكَرِيِ الْحَسَنِ، وَصَلِّ عَلَى المُهَدِيِّ الْهَادِي صَاحِبِ الْمَصْوِ وَ الزَّمَانِ وَ خَلِيفَةِ الرَّحْمَنِ وَ قَاطِعِ الْبُرَهَانِ وَسَيِّدِ الْإِنْسِ وَ الْجَانِ صَلَواتُ اللهِ وَسَلَامُهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ عَلَيْمٍ أَجْمَعِينَ.

O God, send peace upon Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafá (the Chosen), 'Alī al-Murtaḍá (the Pleasing), Fāṭimah al-Batūl

(the Devoted), and al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, the grandsons [of the Prophet]. And send peace upon 'Alī, Zayn al-'Ibād (the Adornment of All Servants), Muḥammad al-Bāqir (the Splitter of Knowledge), Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (the Truthful), Musá al-Kāẓim (the Suppresser of his Anger), 'Alī al-Riḍā (the Satisfied), Muḥammad al-Taqī (the Self-Restrained), 'Alī al-Naqī (the Immaculate), and al-Ḥasan al-Zakī al-Askarī (the Pure, who was settled in al-'Askar district in Samarrā'). And send peace upon al-Mahdī al-Ḥadī (the Guided Guide), [who is] the Owner of this Time and Age, the Vicegerent of the All-Merciful, the Possessor of Decisive Proof, and the Master of Mankind and Jinn. May God's peace and mercy be upon him and them all.

One should know that the primary task is *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and litanies are only to assist and complement this task. Therefore, it is not prohibited to abandon certain litanies [if necessary, or based on one's condition].

In my times of leisure in this stage [the forty-day periods], I used to recite the supplications and orisons found in al-Ṣaḥīfah al-ʿAlawiyyah and al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah [or the supplications and orisons of Imāms ʿAlī and Sajjād in general]. I would also seek blessings from the holy names of the Prophet's Household, his great Companions, the Four Archangels [i.e. Gabriel, Michael, ʿIzrāʾīl (the Angel of Death) and Seraphiel (Isrāfīl, the angel that will blow the trumpet)], the grand prophets, the masters of Islamic law (shariah), and the sheikhs of the spiritual path (tarīqah). Most days, I used to greet and send salaam upon them one by one, ask for God's mercy upon them, and ask each of them for spiritual support, attention and ardor (himmah).



The transcriber says:17

I once performed the forty-day sittings as described above as much as possible. Then I took up another forty-day cycle, where I used the supplication of Idrīs (Enoch, peace be upon him) as a litany. In terms of number, time, order, conditions and manners, I followed what the late Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs has written in his treatise in this regard. 19

I began the forty-day sittings with the following invocations:

1. I recited the following verse for 1080 times in one sitting, and did this for multiple forty-day cycles [or for several days]:

Your God is One God; there is no god but Him, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate. (2:163)

- I recited Chapter 100 (al- 'Ādiyāt'), 40,000 times over three forty-day cycles.
- 3. During these three cycles, I recited Chapter 1 (al-Fatihah) ten times after each obligatory prayer.

The effect of these three invocations is to sever worldly attachments that impede one's spiritual progress.

Moreover, I sometimes used to resort to the spirituality of Mercury and ask for its support and attention. Indeed the people of secrets receive help from the spirituality of Mercury. It is a good idea for a beginner to go and observe Mercury after sunset or before sunrise, when it can be seen. He should say salaam to it, then take one step backward and say:

O Mercury! I've been waiting indeed,

For days and nights, To see you and succeed.

Then he should take another step back and say:

Now I have come, So give me some aid,

To gain gnosis, And onward I proceed.

Then he should take another step backward and say:

By the command of the Lord Of the heavens and the earth,

Give me every good And all that I need.²¹

Attending mosques, sacred locations and holy shrines also have a direct impact on one's capacity and capability to receive divine effusions. In fact, the gates of the spiritual realms have opened to most mystics while they were in one of these places.

The honorable Sayyid [Ibn Ṭāwūs] narrated, "I had a spiritual state in Sāmarrā³ that was beyond description, as a result of the divine grace that is found in that place." His usual spot was in a terrace opposite to the Sanctified Cellar (al-sirdāb al-muqaddas). Later on, he built a great mosque there, which came to be known as the mosque of Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs. However, nothing of that mosque remains today.

Hereby ends the transcription of this noble treatise attributed to Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, by the hands of God's servant, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabāʾī, on the night of Sunday, 10 Shawwāl 1354 AH (5 January 1936).

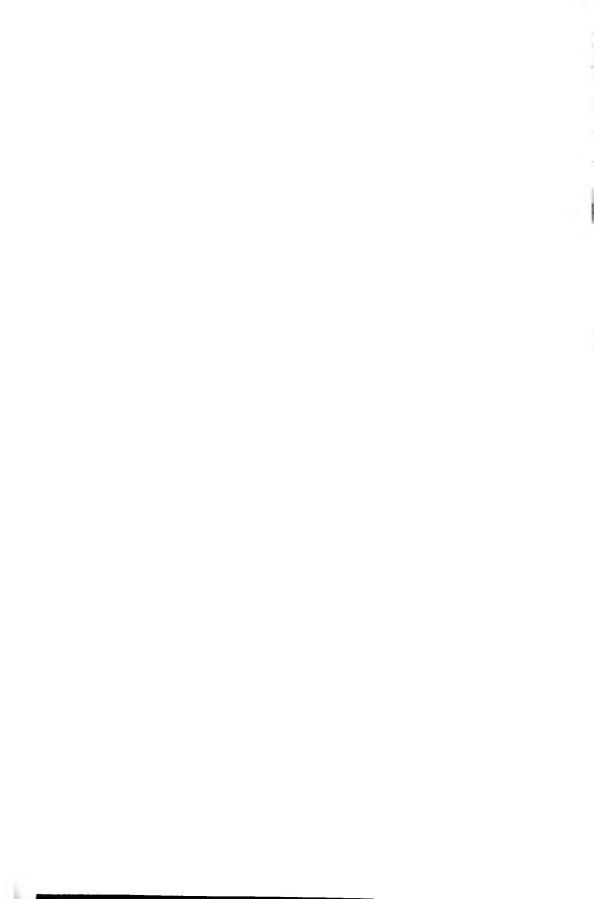
**

And hereby ends my transcription of the copy of my unmatched teacher and master, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabāʾī (May God extend his life), by the hands of this destitute nondescript being, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, on the day of Arbaʿīn, 20 Ṣafar 1377 AH (9 September 1957). All praise belongs to God, the Lord of all beings.



ANNOTATIONS ON THE TREATISE

BY ĀYATULLĀH ḤUSAYNĪ ṬIHRĀNĪ



Notes on Chapter One

1. This expression is reminiscent of the following verses of the Holy Quran:

وَلَقَدْرَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَى

And verily he saw Him yet another time. (53:13)

... فَتَدَلَّى ﴿ فَكَانَ قَابَ فَوْسَنِي أَوْ أَدْنَى.

...Then He came down [suspended] Till he was two bows' length away, or even nearer. (53:8-9)

...وَجِنْنَابِكَ عَلَى مَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيداً.

...And We bring thee [O Muḥammad] as a witness against them. (4:41)

2. This is based on the following part of al-Ziyārat al-Jāmi^cah:

...by He who confided you His secret, and appointed you to maintain the affairs of his creatures...

Şaduq, Uyum-i akhbar al-Rida, 1:309.

3. This is not a direct quotation from the Glorious Quran, but it corresponds to three similar verses in the Quran:

Hast thou received the story of Moses? When he saw a fire and said unto his family, "Wait! Truly I observe a fire. Perhaps I may bring you an ember therefrom or I may find guidance at the fire." (20:9-10)

[Remember] when Moses said to his family, "Truly I observe a fire. I will bring you news of it, or I will bring you a flaming ember that you may warm yourselves." (27:7)

Then, when Moses had fulfilled the term and was traveling with his family, he observed a fire on the side of Mount Tur. He said to his family, "Wait! Truly I observe a fire. Perhaps I may bring you news of it or a firebrand that you may warm yourselves." (28:29)

As one can see, the text is not exactly any of these three verses, although it captures their meaning. Instead of directly quoting from the Quran, perhaps the author (may God elevate his rank) wanted to put the three verses together with some additions as his own composition in a graceful way.

Narrations on the emergence of wisdom from the heart onto the tongue in Shia sources

4. The narrations concerning the emergence of wisdom from one's heart have been reported in three main Shia books of tradition. They are the following:

No servant makes [himself] sincere for God for forty days except that the fountains of wisdom will flow from his heart onto his tongue.

Şadūq, 'Uyūn-i akhbār al-Riḍā, 1:74, reporting with its chain of transmission from Dārim ibn Qabīṣāh ibn Nahshal ibn Majma' al-Nahshalī al-Ṣanʿānī, narrating in Sāmarrā' from 'Alī ibn Mūsá al-Riḍā, from his father, from his grandfather, from Muḥammad ibn 'Alī, from his father, from Jābir ibn 'Abd-Allāh, from 'Alī, from the Messenger of God (peace be upon them). A similar version has been reported from the same source in Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 67:242-243, and Shaykh 'Abbās Qummī, Safīnat al-biḥār, 1:408.

The second narration is:

Whoever makes [himself] sincere for God for forty days, God will make the fountains of wisdom gush forth from his heart onto his tongue.

Ibn Fahd al-Ḥillī, *'Uddat al-dā'*ī, p. 232, reported with an incomplete chain of transmission (*mursal*) from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family). It is quoted in Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 67:249.

The third narration is:

No servant makes his faith sincere for God for forty days [or, no servant makes beautiful invocation of God for forty days] except that God makes him disinterested in this world, shows him its maladies and remedies, establishes wisdom in his heart, and brings it out on his tongue...

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:16, reported from Ibn Uyaynah, from al-Sindī, from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him). Majlisī has quoted it in Biḥār al-anwār, 67:240.

As one can see, the wording is different, but the meaning is the same. As for Sunni sources, it has been reported in the following ways:

There is no servant who acts sincerely for God for forty days except that the fountains of wisdom will emerge from his heart onto his tongue.

Ghazzālī, Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn, 14:179.

Whoever renounces this world and makes sincere worship for forty days, God will make the fountains of wisdom flow from his heart onto his tongue.

Ibid., 13:116 (annotations).

Whoever makes [himself] sincere for God for forty days, the fountains of wisdom will emerge from his heart onto his tongue.

Suhrawardī, 'Awārif al-nıa 'ārif, p. 1687.

The meaning of stages and stations

5. Manāzil (stages, plural of manzil) were places where travelers used to stop for rest. These places were usually four farsakhs from one another (about 21.5 kilometers). Therefore, a distance of four farsakhs—which is the same as a "courier's distance" (masāfat al-barīd)—is referred to as one manzil. Marāfail (stations) is the plural of marfalah, which refers to the distance of one day's journey, which equals two manzils (two barīds). The late author has presented the realms of existence as a set of stations (marāfail), whereby the completion of one station and entry into another is the completion of one realm and entry into another. Then the degrees within each realm are resembled by the stages (manāzil) of a journey, whereby finishing one stage and entering another is finishing one degree and starting another.

Narrations on the leavening of Adam's clay for forty days

6. The narration quoted in the text has been reported by Najm al-Dīn Rāzī in Mirṣād al-ʿībād, p. 38, and in Risālah-yi ʿīshq va ʿīaql, p. 83. It has also been narrated from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) that:

Truly God leavened Adam's clay with His hand for forty days.

Ghazzālī, lḥyā' ulūm al-din, 14:10. Suhrawardī says,

He was created from earth and his clay was leavened for forty days so that he would be distanced from the Divine Presence by forty veils. He has been deliberately invested with these veils which enable him to pursue and build this world, and debar him from the Divine Presence and the realms of proximity...

'Awārif al-ma 'ārif, p. 1688.

[tr: In Arabic, yad (hand) alludes to power, and "two hands" indicate maximum power. In many places in the Quran and the narrations, the "two hands" of God imply utmost power. In the above narration it could also be a reference to a direct diffusion of mercy and existential perfection from God, with little or no intermediaries.]

7. These verses concern the appointed time of Moses and the deliverance of his people:

And [remember] when We appointed with Moses forty nights... (2:51)

...So he completed the appointed time of his Lord in forty nights... (7:142)

Said He, "Then it shall be forbidden them for forty years that they will wander in the earth..." (5:26)

The human intellect reaches its maximum strength at age forty

8. This is according to the verse:

...Until, when he attaineth full strength and reacheth forty years, he saith, "O my Lord, dispose me that I may give thanks for Thy blessing wherewith Thou hast blessed me..." (46:15)

The common view that one's intellect keeps growing after forty is an error. Of course, one acquires more experience after that age, which makes one's judgments more accurate, but this is due to more experience, not due to a stronger power of intellection. Therefore, if the person could supposedly have the same experiences at the age of forty, he would have made the same accurate judgments.

Narrations on the age of forty being the last chance to exit the world of nature

9. There are a few narrations in this regard:

When forty years of one's life have elapsed, he is told, "Be on your guard, for you are not excused [anymore]."...

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:455, reported from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him) with an unconnected chain of transmission (marf \bar{u}).

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَلَفِي فُسْحَةٍ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ مَا يَنْنَهُ وَ بَيْنَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً فَإِذَا بَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً أَوْحَى اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَى مَلَايْكَتِهِ أَنِي قَدْ عَقَرْتُ عَبْدِي عُمُراً وَقَدْ طَالَ فَغَلِظًا وَشَدِّدَا وَخَقَظًا وَٱكْتَبَا عَلَيْهِ قَلِيلَ عَمَلِهِ وَكَثِيرَهُ وَصَغِيرَهُ وَكَبِيرُهُ.

Indeed a servant is at ease until he reaches forty years. But when he reaches forty years, God reveals to his two [scribing] angels, "Truly I have given my servant a lifetime. So be harsh and severe on him, and record and write [all] his actions, be that major or minor, abundant or little."

Şadūq, al-Khiṣāl, 2:545, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

When a servant reaches thirty-three years, he has reached full strength (balagha ashuddahu). When he reaches forty years, he has reached his full term. Thus, when he commences forty-one, he is on a decline. And indeed, it behooves a person of fifty years to be like one who is taking his last breath.

lbid., reported from Imam Şadiq (peace be upon him).

أَبْنَاءُ الأَرْبَعِينَ زَرْعُ قَدْدَنَا حَصَادُهُ...

Children of forty are cultivations who are about to be harvested...

Sabzawārī, Jāni al-akhbār, p. 330, reported from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family). [tr: The author of Jāni al-akhbār is not known with certainty. See the editor's introduction on ibid., and also Āqā Buzurg Ṭihrānī, al-Dharīah, 5:33ff.]

NOTES ON CHAPTER ONE

If a man has not repented by the time he is forty, then Satan rubs his hand on the man's face and says, "May my father be sacrificed for a face that will not be saved."

Qummī, Safīnat al-biḥār, 1:504.

Some narrations that mention the number forty (arba in)

10. The word "forty" has appeared in numerous narrations. For example, it is inferred from one narration that if one recites Chapter 1 (al-Hamd, the first chapter of the Quran) over a glass of water for forty times and then pours it on a person with fever, then God will cure that person. See Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 59:104.

Here is a collection of other narrations in this regard:

The prayer of anyone who drinks wine does not count for forty days.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 6:402, attributed to the Messenger of God and confirmed by Imām Bāqir (peace be upon them and their family).

If one backbites a Muslim man or woman, God will not accept his prayer or fasting for forty days and nights, unless that person forgives him.

Sabzawārī, Jāmi cal-akhbār, p. 412, reported from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family).

Truly the earth cries to God in complaint for forty days due to the urine of a man who is not circumcised.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 53:182, in a letter from Imām Mahdī (peace be upon him).

إِذَا مَاتَ الْمُؤْمِنُ فَحَضَرَ جِنَازَتَهُ أَرْبَعُونَ رَجُلاً مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَقَالُوا: اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا لَا نَعْلَمْ مِنْهُ إِلَّا خَيْراً وَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا لَا نَعْلَمْ مِنْهُ إِلَّا خَيْراً وَ أَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ مِنَا اللَّهُ مَا عَلِمْتُ مِّالًا لَا اللَّهُ مَا عَلِمْتُ مِاللَّا اللَّهُ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْتُ مِاللَّا لَا اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْتُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْتُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْتُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْتُ مِنَا لَا اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْتُ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْتُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ مِنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ مُنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ مِنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَا اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ مِنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَلْهُمْ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ مُنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَى اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ مَا عَلَمْ مُنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ مُنْ اللَّهُ مُنْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ اللَّهُ مَا عَلَمْ مُنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مُنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مُنْ مُنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مِنْ اللَّهُ مُنْ اللَّالِمُ اللَّهُ مُنْ الْ

When a believer dies, if forty men among the believers attend his funeral and say, "O God, truly we know not of him except good, and Thou knowest better than we do," then God, the Supreme and Exalted says, "Truly I have carried out your testimony and have pardoned him of what I know and you do not."

Şadūq, al-Khiṣāl, 2:538, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

The supplication of anyone who supplicates for forty believers before supplicating for himself will be answered.

Ibn Fahd al-Ḥillī, *'Uddat al-dā'*ī, p. 182, reported from Ibn 'Umayr, from Hishām ibn Sālim, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

كَانَ فِي بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَابِدُ فَأُوحَى اللهُ تَعَالَى إِلَى دَاوُدَ (عليه السّلام) أَنَهُ مُرَاءٍ. قَالَ: ثُمَّ إِنّهُ مَاتَ فَلَمَ يَشْهَدُ جِنَازَتَهُ دَاوُدُ (عليه السّلام). قَالَ: فَقَامَ أَرْبَعُونَ مِن بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ فَقَالُوا: اللّهُمَّ إِنّا لاَ نَعْلَمُ مِنْهُ إِلّا خَيْراً وَأَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِ مِنّا فَاغْفِرْ لَهُ. قَلْمَا غُشِلَ أَنِي أَرْبَعُونَ غَيْرُهُمْ فَقَالُوا: اللّهُمَّ إِنّا لاَ نَعْلَمُ مِنْهُ إِلّا خَيْراً وَأَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِ مِنّا فَاغْفِرْ لَهُ. قَلْمَا وُضِعَ فِي قَبْرِهِ قَامَ أَرْبَعُونَ غَيْرُهُمْ فَقَالُوا: اللّهُمَّ إِنّا لاَ نَعْلَمُ مِنْهُ إِلّا خَيْراً وَأَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِ مِنّا فَاغْفِرْ لَهُ. قَالَ: فَأُوحَى اللهُ تَعَالَى إِلَى دَاوُدَ (عليه السّلام): للّذِي أَخْبَرْتَنِي. قَالَ: فَأُوحَى اللهُ يَعْلَمُونَ مُنْ اللّهُمْ إِنّا لاَ نَعْلَمُ مِنْهُ إِلّا خَيْراً وَأَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِ مِنّا فَاغْفِرْ لَهُ. قَالَ: فَأُوحَى اللهُ تَعَالَى إِلَى دَاوُدَ (عليه السّلام): للّذِي أَخْبَرْتَنِي. قَالَ: فَأُوحَى اللهُ إِلَّيْهِ: أَنْهُ قَدْشَهِدَقَوْمُ فَأَجْرَتُ شَهَادَةً مُعْرَتُ لُهُ مَا عَلِمْتُ مِاللّهُمْ إِلّهُ مُونَ مُ قَلْ اللهُ إِلَيْهِ: أَنْهُ قَدْشَهِدَقَوْمُ فَأَمْ وَغَفَرْتُ لَهُ مُا عَلِمْتُ مِاللّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ وَنَ مُنْ مُنْ اللّهُ مُ إِلّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ وَالْمُنْ مُؤْمُ اللّهُ اللّهُ مُا عَلِمْتُ مِا اللّهُ مُنْ اللّهُ مُؤْمُ اللّهُ عَلَى اللّهُ الْعُلْمُ الْمُعْلِمُ اللّهُ الْمُنْ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ الْحَلْمُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ الْعُلْمُ اللّهُ الللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّ

There was a pious worshipper among the Israelites (Banī Isrāʾīl) about whom God revealed to David (peace be upon him) that he was a hypocrite. When the worshipper died, David (peace be upon him) did not attend his funeral. However, forty people among the Israelites stood up in prayer and said, "O God, truly we know nothing of him except good, and Thou knowest him better than we do, so forgive him." When his body was washed, another group of forty came forward and said, "O God, truly we know nothing of him except good, and Thou knowest him better than we do, so forgive him." When his body was laid in his grave, another group of forty stood up in prayer and said, "O God, truly we know nothing of him except good, and Thou knowest him better than we do, so forgive him." So God revealed to David (peace be upon him), "What stopped you from offering a funeral prayer for him?" David (peace be upon him) said, "It

was because of what Thou had informed me." God revealed to him, "Indeed, a group of people have testified [in his favor], so I have carried out their testimony and have pardoned him of what I know and they do not."

Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 79:60, quoted from Ibn Fahd al-Ḥillī, *Uddat al-dā* ī, p. 149, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

Ibn Fahd has offered a supplication to alleviate illnesses. He says, "This [solution] has been tried, so make use of it: If one recites the following formula for forty times after the Morning Prayer and rubs the organ that feels ill—especially if it is an open wound—then he will be cured by God's permission:

In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate. All praise belongs to God, the Lord of all beings. God is sufficient for us, and [such] an excellent Trustee He is. Blessed is God, the Best of creators. There is no movement and no power save by God, the All-Supreme, the All-Magnificent.

Ibn Fahd al-Ḥillī, $Uddat al-da\bar{s}$, p. 272-273. Also, based on the narrations, there are two people whose supplications will be answered: "One who supplicates for forty of his brothers by their names and the names of their fathers, and one who is wearing an agate ($faq\bar{s}q$) or turquoise ($f\bar{n}\bar{u}zaj$) ring." Ibid., p. 128.

"It is also narrated that a person with fever would be cured by pouring water on him. Should that be difficult for him, he should place his hand in cold water. If someone's pain is intensified, he should recite Chapter 1 (al-Ḥamd) forty times over a glass of water, and then place it on the aching spot. The sick person should also have a basket of wheat with him to give to beggars with his own hands and ask them to pray for his healing." Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 59:286, reported from Shahīd al-Awwal, al-Durūs al-shar ʿyyah, 3:48.

A believer has five signs: performing fifty-one units of prayer [daily], Ziyārat al-Arba'in [i.e. visiting Imām Ḥusayn on Ṣafar 20, forty days after the day of his martyrdom, Muḥarram 10], wearing his ring on the right hand, prostrating on earth, and reciting

"In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate" aloud [in prayers].

Ibn Ṭāwūs, lqbāl al-a snāl, 3:100, where Ibn Ṭāwūs says, "This has been narrated to us with its chain of transmission up to my grandfather Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭūsī [i.e. Shaykh al-Ṭūsī], who has reported the narration with its chain of transmission from Imām al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (peace be upon him)."

Whoever amongst my nation learns forty traditions (hadith) of what they need concerning their religion, God will resurrect that person on the Day of Resurrection as an erudite scholar.

Şadūq, al-Khiṣāl, 2:541, reported from Imām 'Alī, from the Messenger of God (peace be upon them and their family).

Adam wept forty days for Paradise in prostration.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 96:35, quoted from 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, Tafsīr al-Qummī, 1:44, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

Adam wept forty nights for Abel.

Şadūq, Kanıāl al-dīn wa tamān al-ni Snah, 1:214, reported from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him).

[About Noah's flood] Water was raining from the sky and gushing from the earth for forty days...

^cAlī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, *Tafsīr al-Qumnī*, 1:328, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). [tr: Also see Genesis 7:4 and 7:12.]

Concerning the verse, "And when he [Moses] reached full strength" (28:14), Bayḍāwī says, "That is the point beyond which one does not grow anymore, and that is between thirty and forty years of age, as one's intellect is perfected at that time. It has been narrated that no prophet has been sent [to his people] except at age forty."

Concerning "And when he [Moses] was ripe" (28:14) he says, "That is, ripe in terms of body or intellect..." Baydawi, Anwār al-tanzīl, 4:173. Majlisī has quoted it from Baydawī in Biḥār al-anwār, 13:50.

[tr: There are of course exceptions to the claim that "No prophet has been sent to his people except at age forty." Two such exceptions that are mentioned in the Quran are Prophets John (Yaḥyá) and Jesus (19:12, 19:29-30).]

Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him) said:

أَمْلَى اللهُ عَزَّوَ جَلَّ لِقِرْعَوْنَ مَا بَيْنَ الْكَلِمَتَيْنِ قَوْلَهُ (أَنَّا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى) وَقَوْلَهُ (مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي) أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً ثُمَّ (أَخَذَهُ اللهُ نَكَالَ الْآخِرَةِ وَ الْأُولَى). وَكَانَ بَيْنَ أَنْ قَالَ اللهُ عَزَّقَ جَلَّ لِوْسَى وَ هَارُونَ (عليهما الشلام) (قَدْ أُجِيبَتْ دَعُوتُكُمَا) وَ بَيْنَ أَنْ عَرَفَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى الْإِجَابَةَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً.

God, Majestic and Exalted He is, gave Pharaoh a reign of forty years between the time he said, "I am your lord, the highest" (79:24) until the time he said, "I know not any god for you other than me" (28:38). Then "God seized him with the chastisement of the Last World and the First" (79:25). It also took forty years from the time God told Moses and Aaron (peace be upon them), "Your call has been answered" (10:89) until He showed them what they had asked for.

Then the Imam narrated that Gabriel said,

I had a serious argument with my Lord concerning Pharaoh, where I said, "O Lord, dost Thou let go of him while he has said, 'I am your lord, the highest?' He said, "Only a [weak] servant like you would say something like this."

Ṣadūq, al-Khiṣāl, 2:539-540, reported with its chain of transmission. Concerning the revelation of Chapter 18 (al-Kahf), there is a long narration by Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him), that after meeting with a group of Jews [and/or Christians], the polytheists gathered around Abū Ṭālib:

...وَاجْتَمَعُوا إِلَى أَبِي طَالِبٍ (عليه السّلام) فَقَالُوا: يَاأْبَاطَالِبٍ إِنَّ ابْنَ أَخِيكَ يَزْعُمُ أَنَّ خَبَرَ السَّمَاءِ يَلِيهِ، وَخَنُ نَشَالُهُ عَنْ مَسَائِلَ، فَإِنْ أَجَابَنَا عَنْهَا عَلِمْنَا أَنَّهُ صَادِقٌ، وَ إِنْ لَمَر يُجِبْنَا عَلِمْنَا أَنَّهُ كَاذِبُ. فَقَالَ أَبُو طَالِبٍ: سَلُوهُ عَمَّا بَدَا لَكُمْ. فَسَأَلُوهُ عَنِ الثَّلَاثِ مَسَائِلَ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم): غَداً أُخْبِرُكُرُ، وَلَمْ يَسْتَنْنِ. فَاخْتُبِسَ الْوَحْيُ عَلَيْهِ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْماً حَقَّى اغْتَمَّ النَّبِيُّ (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) وَشَكَّ أَصْحَابُهُ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا آمَنُوا بِهِ...

They told him, "O Abū Ṭālib! Indeed your nephew claims that he receives the news of the heavens. So we shall ask him certain questions; if he answers them we would know that he is truthful, and if he cannot answer them we would know that he is a liar." Abū Ṭālib said, "Ask him whatever you want." They asked him [the Prophet] three questions. The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) said, "I shall inform you tomorrow," without saying "God willing." Thus, revelation was barred from him for forty days, such that it grieved the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family), and put doubt in [the hearts of] his Companions who had converted to Islam...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 14:423, quoted from 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, Tafsīr al-Qummī, 2:32. The following narration concerns the birth of Ḥaḍrat Fāṭimah (peace be upon her):

...إذْ هَبَطَ عَلَيْهِ جَبْرَيْدُلُ (عليه السّلام) فِي صُورَتِهِ الْمُظْمَى قَدْ نَشَرَأُ جَنِيَّهُ حَتَّى أَخَذَتْ مِنَ الشَّرِقِ إِلَى الْمُعْرِبِ فَنَادَاهُ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ الْمَلِيُّ الْأَعْلَى يَقْرَأُ عَلَيْكَ السَّلَامَ وَهُوَيَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ تَعْتَزِلَ عَنْ خَدِيجَةً أَرْبَعِينَ صَبَاحاً. فَشَقَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى النَّبِيِ (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) وَكَانَ فَمَا مُحِبًا وَبِهَا وَالِمَا... وَالِمَا اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْماً يَصُومُ النَّهَارَويَقُومُ اللَّيْلَ...

Then Gabriel descended upon him in his most magnificent form—having opened his wings, spreading over the east and the west—and called him, "O Muḥammad, the most Supreme of the supreme sends peace upon you, and orders you to abstain from Khadījah for forty days." That was hard on the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family), for he had a great love and affection for her. Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) spent forty days and nights, fasting the days and standing up in prayer at nights...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 16:78, quoted from Raḍī al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Yūsuf ibn Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī (ʿAllāmah Ḥillī's brother), al- ʿIdad al-qawiyyah, p. 220.

11. [tr: Different variations of this statement are sometimes quoted as a Prophetic narration, but apparently it is not a narration. Nevertheless,

there are many narrations on the merits of carrying a cane. See 'Ajlūnī, Kashf al-khafā', 1:321.]

- 12. This is the same as the last narration in note 9 above, with minor differences, reported in Qummī, Safīnat al-biḥār, 1:504; Ghazzālī, Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn, 8:50. Also see 'Alī ibn al-Ḥasan Ṭabrisī, Mishkāt al-anwār, p. 169; Daylamī, Irshād al-qulūb, 1:185.
- 13. [tr: The second statement by Satan was not found in the narrations.]
- 14. Muttaqī al-Hindī, Kanz al- ummāl, 15:775; Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 30:415.

Narrations that define neighborhood

- 15. Four narrations have been reported in this regard in Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, Wasāʾl al-Shīʿah, 12:132. They are:
 - 1. Quoting from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:669, reported with its chain of transmission from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him):

One's neighbors are defined by forty houses on each side: from the front, from the back, from the right, and from the left.

2. Quoting from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:669, reported with its chain of transmission from Imām Ṣādiq, from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family):

Every forty houses are neighbors—from the front, from the back, from the right, and from the left.

Quoting from Şadūq, Ma ʿānī al-akhbār, p. 165, reported with its chain
of transmission: Muʿāwiyah ibn ʿAmmār asked Imām Şādiq (peace
be upon him) about the definition of one's neighbor. The Imām replied,

Forty houses on every side.

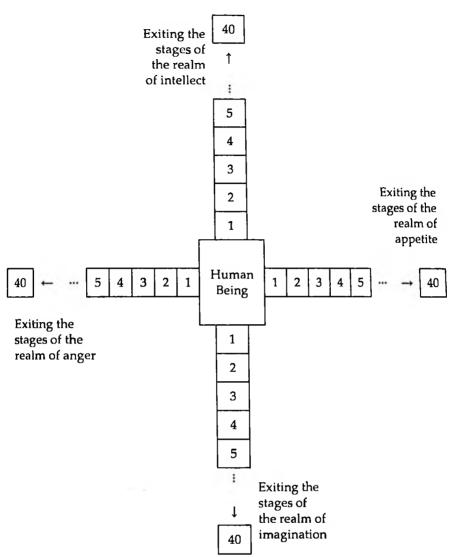
 Quoting from Şadūq, al-Khiṣāl, 2:544, reported with its chain of transmission from Imām Ṣādiq, from his fathers, from Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon them):

The sanctuary ($har\bar{n}n$) of a mosque is up to forty cubits ($dhir\bar{a}^c$, which adds up to about 20 meters), and a neighbor includes up to forty homes in four directions.

The four faculties of humankind and the relationship between them

16. What the author means is that human being is surrounded on his four sides by the four faculties of intellect, imagination, appetite and anger. One does not reach the station of annihilation in God (fanā) unless he leaves behind forty stages of each of these faculties. In fact, if a person travels past one station of appetite, it does not mean that he is completely done with that station, because that station is still latent in his being. The signs and traces of that station are not eliminated unless the person goes as far as forty stations from that point. Therefore, assuming that appetite, for instance, has many stations, one would not exit any given station unless he traverses forty stations from that station. Otherwise, the mere passing of one station is not sufficient for a complete deliverance, as the person could return to that station due to some event or accident. The same applies to the realms of intellect, anger and imagination. As a result, one would truly exit the first station of anger only when he has left behind its fortieth station, and one would completely exit the fifth station of anger only when he has left behind its forty-fifth station, and so on. One should carry on forty stations from any given starting point in order to be completely delivered from that initial station.

However, there is a difference between the divine faculty of intellect and the other three faculties. The intellect is a guide and leader for the person, and it is at odds with the other three faculties. Those three faculties are always in conflict and disagreement with the intellect. Every stage among the forty stages of intellect sympathizes with its neighboring stages—keeping in mind that the neighboring stages are those that are up to forty stations away. They chant with one another about how lonely they are in this corporeal world, surrounded by the faculties of anger, appetite and imagination. The only acquaintance of a stranger is another stranger. But the neighboring stages among the forty stages of the other faculties see themselves being attacked by the army of intellect. Therefore, they resist as much as they can against being conquered and driven out of their position. They chant with one another: "We shall withstand and resist against these incessant assaults forever." This is illustrated below.



17. These two poems (originally in the opposite order) are by Imra² al-Qays ibn al-Ḥajar al-Kindī (d. c. 80 BH/545) through which he addressed a lady who had died in loneliness, when he had come across her grave. Sometimes they are followed by additional lines such as the following:

If you stay with me, You'll be my dear.

But should you depart, I'll have no peer.

See Sharīf, al-Jāmi al-shawāhid, p. 13; Narāqī, Khazā n, p. 132.

The narration, "I spend the night with my Lord."

18. Sayyid ^cAlī Khān [Ibn Ma^cṣūm] has reported this narration exactly as mentioned in the text, in his commentary on al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah: Riyāḍ al-sālikān, 1:280. In another narration reported by the Shias, Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) was asked about fasting on the days of tashrīq (11th, 12th and 13th of Dhū al-Ḥijjah). He replied:

The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) prohibited fasting on these days only for those who are in Mina [i.e. those who perform the [mij], but there is no problem in it elsewhere.

The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) also prohibited continuous fasting [i.e. without breaking the fast at night] while he used to do it [himself]. When he was asked about this, he said, "I am not like one of you. Indeed I stay with my Lord, Who gives me food and drink."

Ṣadūq, Man lā yaḥḍuruhu al-faqīh, 2:171-172. It has been quoted from the same source in Fayḍ al-Kāshānī, al-Maḥajjah al-bayḍā², 2:142.

The narrations reported in Sunni sources do not include "with my Lord" ("inda Rabbi"). The wording in some of them is "I pass the night" (abītu) and in others it is "I stay" (azillu). Here are the Sunni narrations:

The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) prohibited continuous fasting. He was told, "But you observe continuous fasting." He said, "Who among you is like me? Indeed I pass the night while my Lord gives me food and drink."

Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 8:131, reported with its chain of transmission from Abū Hurayrah. It is also reported in Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 3:133-134, reported through three chains of transmission from Abū Hurayrah (through Abū Salamah ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Abū Zurʿah and al-Aʿraj).

The Messenger of God said, "Abstain from continuous fasting. Abstain from continuous fasting." He was told, "But you observe continuous fasting, O Messenger of God." He said, "My case is not like yours. Indeed I pass the night while my Lord gives me food and drink."

Mālik ibn Anas, al-Muwaṭṭa², 1:301, reported with its chain of transmission from al-Acraj, from Abū Hurayrah.

The Prophet continued fasting at the end of the month, and so did a group of the people. When the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) was informed of this he said, "Had the month been extended for me, I would have continued fasting such that [even] those who are most diligent in their quest would have abandoned their quest. Truly I am not like one of you. Indeed I am ever given food and drink by my Lord."

Bukhārī, Ṣaḥāḥ al-Bukhārī, 8:131, reported with its chain of transmission from Anas; Muslim, Ṣaḥāḥ Muslim, 3:134.

The Prophet fasted continuously and so did the people. But it was difficult for them, so the Prophet prohibited them from doing it. They said, "But you observe continuous fasting." He said, "My case is not like yours. Indeed I am ever eating and drinking."

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYING AND WAYFARING

Bukhārī, Ṣaḥūḥ al-Bukhārī, 2:232, reported with its chain of transmission from 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Umar. Similar versions of the above narrations are also reported in Muslim, Ṣaḥūḥ Muslim, 3:134; and Mālik, al-Muwaṭa', 1:300.

- 19. See Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 18:320; al-Qurṭubī, al-Jāmi 'li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān, 10:285. The narrations have mentioned milk, but I have not seen milk and rice anywhere. When I asked my teacher and master, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī about it, he said, "I have not seen any such narrations either, though I did search for it."
- 20. That is, one should have completed the realms before the realm of sincerity, enter the realm of sincerity, and complete the forty stages there in order to reach the realm of emergence of the springs of wisdom.

Notes on Chapter Two

1. Utter immateriality—including disentanglement from contingent potentiality—can only be achieved after one's death. The explanation that follows in the text—that materiality cannot be combined with eternity—is not about contingent potentiality, but it is about the previous point—that God's sustenance is for sacred souls and brings about eternal life. What is meant is that the body degenerates, but His Face—meaning His manifestation—subsists. Therefore, if the human soul in its journey becomes a manifestation of the Divine Light, Names and Attributes, it will be among those who are "living, and receive sustenance there with their Lord." The sustenance that it will receive is nothing but genuine knowledge and true gnosis.

It should be noted that [before death,] one's achievement of immateriality and disentanglement (tajarrud) would be within one's contingent potentiality. That is, even if a wayfarer enters the realm of the Divine Names (lähūt), becomes annihilated in the Divine Name Ahad (the One), and achieves subsistence after annihilation (which is the same as subsistence by God), he has not yet achieved utter immateriality in every sense. This is because that would involve disentanglement from his contingent potentiality, which is never achieved as long as one is in this life. The knowledge of such a person would be the divine knowledge that encompasses the past and the future, and he would have togetherness (ma 'iyyah) with everything. Yet, his soul is not completely disentangled because it still has to manage the body. This attachment prevents the achievement of utter disentanglement by which one would go beyond the limits of contingency. This spirit has a closer relationship with its body [before death] compared to its relationship with other beings. However, when the spirit abandons the body upon death and completely disentangles from managing the body, it will achieve utter divine immateriality.

Shāh Walī-Allāh Dihlawī says, "I, a destitute being, have been informed that the [complete] dissociation of the spirit from the body occurs five hundred years after one's death." Hanna "āt, p. 63 (part 11).

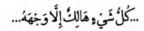
Muḥyī al-Din ibn al-cArabī also claims in many places that the permanent archetype (al- ayn al-thābit) of a wayfarer who achieves subsistence by God will persist. Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah, 4:221 (bāb 223).

This does not contradict the idea that among all creatures—including the angels—it is only the human being that is the Greatest Name of God

(al-ism al-a 'znm'). The human being can achieve all degrees of existential perfection while he maintains the body; there is only one stage of total immateriality that is to be achieved after death, and that is utter disentanglement from the permanent archetype and the imperfections of contingency.

All existents perish except the Face of God

The Face of God here refers to the manifestation of God's Names in all existents.



... Everything is perishing save His Face... (28:88)

In this verse, whether the pronoun "his" refers to "God" or to "everything," the meaning would be the same. In the first case, the meaning would be: All beings shall perish except for the Face of God, which refers to His Names by which He has appeared and manifested in all beings. In the second case, it would mean: Every being shall perish except for its face, which is none other than its aspect of being a manifestation of God; it is that aspect that shall remain.

All that is thereon [on the earth] is perishing There remaineth but the Face of thy Lord, majestic and splendid. (55:26-27)

Here, "majestic and splendid" are the attributes of "Face," not the attributes of "Lord" (because they are $marf\bar{u}^c$ in terms of inflection). That is, the Face of God—which is His Names and Attributes—shall remain without any death or destruction, and His Face is majestic and splendid.

...And wheresoever you turn, there is the Face of God... (2:115)

[tr: See p. 163 below for more on the "Face of God."]

The difference between $ikhl\bar{a}s$ (practicing sincerity) and $khul\bar{u}s$ (being chosen by God)

3. Khulāṣ is the realm of purity and purification (thhārah), which is the realm of the chosen servants of God (mukhlaṣān). It is above and superior to the realm of the sincere servants of God (mukhliṣān). A servant should

first show sincerity so that he would be chosen by God. Therefore, sincerity ($ikhl\,\bar{a}\bar{s}$) and being chosen ($khul\,\bar{u}\bar{s}$) are two different realms. However, the late author has treated them as one and the same, and has used the two terms interchangeably as synonyms. When he talks about sincerity ($ikhl\,\bar{a}\bar{s}$) he is referring to $ikhl\,\bar{a}\bar{s}$ by God, which is His choosing and purifying of the servant. It is not about the servant's act of showing sincerity (the servant's $ikhl\,\bar{a}\bar{s}$); rather, it is about the servant being chosen by God (the servant's $khul\,\bar{u}\bar{s}$).

So first, a servant makes himself sincere and shows sincerity. That is *ikhlā*s. The result of the servant's sincerity is that he will be chosen by God [God makes him sincere], which is an action by God. That is *khulūṣ*. Since the two are concomitants and one is a consequent of the other, the author has used them as synonyms.

Notes on Chapter Three

 In addition to these three stations, there is another station that has been mentioned in the Glorious Quran for the most sincere servants of God. It is that they are out of the reach of Satan, and Satan does not have any hope in misleading them. This has been mentioned in the following verses:

[Satan said:] ...and I shall surely mislead them all Except Thy servants among them that are most sincere. (15:39-40)

He [Satan] said: Then, by Thy might, I shall surely mislead them all & Except Thy servants among them that are most sincere. (38:82-83)

However, the author has not mentioned this as a separate station because it is a requisite of the first station. That is, being exempt from reckoning on the Day of Judgment means that Satan does not have any authority over them.

- 2. As the author mentions in the following paragraph, they are also exempt from the inward reckoning on that Day, because they have taken account of themselves by passing through the greatest resurrection, which is the inward resurrection.
- 3. Note that the late author has identified the [ultimate] destination of the journey as the emergence of the springs of wisdom from one's heart, which is the same as subsistence by God (baqā). According to him, one would reach this destination by traveling forty stages in the realm of sincerity. When a wayfarer enters the realm of sincerity (which is the realm of the mukhlaṣm, the chosen servants of God), he acquires the three stations mentioned above [i.e. the three stations of the mukhlaṣm, as inferred from the Quran]. However, he should yet travel forty stages in this realm in order to achieve the station of subsistence by God where the springs of wisdom emerge from his heart onto his tongue.

Entry into the realm of sincerity means entry into the realm of divinity and necessity [of existence], and that is why it has been identified as the highest degree for a created being and the ultimate station that a

contingent being (mumkin) can achieve. But to be precise, the mere entrance into the realm of sincerity is not the end of the journey, for there is a distance of forty stages (one arba In) between this station and the ultimate destination, which is the realm of subsistence and emergence of wisdom from one's heart onto his tongue. That is why entry into the realm of sincerity has not been equated with the realm where the springs of wisdoms appear on one's tongue. The realm of sincerity corresponds to the emergence of the springs of wisdom in one's heart, but not from his heart onto his tongue. It is only after completing the arba In and actualizing every potentiality in the realm of sincerity that the springs of wisdom flow from one's heart onto his tongue.

- 4. In this verse, "known" is mentioned as the adjective of "provision." However, "known" here does not mean determined or limited, as opposed to being unlimited and infinite. Rather, it serves to show the importance and magnificence of their provision, as opposed to a provision that is not known, meaning little and unimportant.
- 5. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 38:309, reported from Irbilī, Kashf al-ghummah, 1:300, reported from Khwārazmī, al-Manāqib, p. 143. Similar narrations have been reported in Qundūzī, Yanābī al-mawaddah, 2:307-308 and 394. It has also been narrated that:

O cAlī, God has created the people from diverse trees, but He has created me and you from the same tree. I am its trunk and you are its branch. So blessed is a servant who clings to its trunk and eats from its branch.

Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 15:19-20, quoted from Ṭūsī, *al-Amālī*, p. 610.

6. [tr: This refers to a famous narration reported in various ways from the Prophet and the Imāms concerning the creation of the intellect (*'aql*):

When God created the intellect He told it, "Come forth," so it came forth. Then He told it, "Step back," so it stepped back...

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:26; Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:192; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, Kanz al-Junmāl, 3:383.]

Prophethood is necessarily subsequent to some degree of guardianship

7. Prophethood involves revelation, and revelation is the highest form of God's speech, whereby He talks to a servant without any veil or intermediary, as mentioned in this verse:

And no human being is spoken to by God, except by revelation, or from behind a veil, or that He sendeth a messenger... (42:51)

This form of communication is called revelation (waḥy), which is when God manifests to a human being, and it occurs only when the person is in the state of annihilation. This state of annihilation is called wilāyah (guardianship, sainthood). Therefore, if a servant possesses prophethood, he should have already achieved wilāyah. Of course, that need not be absolute and universal wilāyah; rather, as long as some degree of wilāyah (bil-jumlah) is achieved, that would be sufficient for one's prophethood.

- 8. See Muslim, Sahih Muslim, 1:112.
- 9. See Najjād, al-Radd 'alá man yaqūlu al- Qur 'ān makhlūq 62-63.

The robe of grandeur, the white sapphire and the green garden

10. The "robe of grandeur" (ridā al-kibriyā) refers to the property of utmost glory, magnificence and transcendence that belongs to the Essence of God and is beyond every name and identity. The highest point of a human being's journey is to be annihilated in the Name Ahad (the One), which is clearly one of the Names of God [i.e. inferior to His Essence]. This is the utmost degree of immateriality and disentanglement (tajarrud) that a contingent being can achieve, as mentioned above [see note 1 on Chapter 2]. The station above this is absolute and sheer immateriality, which involves one's total disentanglement, even from contingency and the permanent archetype. This can be achieved only after death.

"White sapphire" (al-yāqūtah al-bayḍā) signifies this station of Oneness (aḥadiyyah), which is superior to every manifestation and epiphany, brighter than any name, and the closest of all stations to absoluteness. The "green garden" (al-rawḍah al-khaḍrā) refers to the aspects of multiplicity that are associated with the realm of Unity (wāḥidiyyah). Therefore, "the white sapphire in the green garden" is the highest station, whereby one embraces the station of wāḥidiyyah while being annihilated in aḥadiyyah. It refers to the point of union between the two arcs of One-

ness (aḥadiyyah) and Unity (wāḥidiyyah), as Muḥyī al-Dīn has mentioned about the Messenger of God when sending peace and blessing upon him. See Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, Maṭla-i anwār, 4:123-124; Ibn al-ʿArabī, al-Ṣalawāt al-Muḥamadiyyah, pp. 40-41.

11. Gabriel's words have been narrated as,

لَوْدَنَوْتُأَنْمُلَةُ لَاحْتَرَقْتُ.

Should I approach by a fingertip, I will surely burn.

Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, Mirṣād al-ʿibād, pp. 68, 104, 214 and 216; Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, Risālah-yi ʿishq va ʿaql, pp. 64, 84 and 93.

- 12. Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, Mirṣād al-ʿībād, pp. 127, 136, 215 and 309; Ghazzālī, Iḥyā² ʿulūm al-dīn, 14:147; Hujvīrī, Kashf al-maḥjūb, p. 51. [tr: One version of this narration reads as, "My friends are under My cloak...," with aabā²instead of qibāb.]
- 13. What follows from here until the end of Chapter 3 is not a description of the realm of sincerity, but a description of its preceding realms. The author wants to provide a glimpse of these preceding realms that lead one into being slain in the way of God and entering the realm of sincerity. This includes a description of hypocrites in these realms. A detailed discussion of these realms is presented in Chapter 4. There, the author elaborates on the degrees of being slain in the way of God and its preliminary steps including submission (islām), faith (īmān), migration (hijrah) and struggle (jihād).

Heart and spirit in the mystical nomenclature

14. In Sufi terminology, "heart" (qalb in Arabic, dil in Persian) refers to the realm of angels (malakūt), which is the imaginal world (mithāl). "Spirit" (rūḥ in Arabic, jān in Persian) refers to the realm of immaterial intellects (jabarūt). Ḥāfiz has referred to both of them in the following poem, where the heart and the spirit signify the imaginal world and the realm of intellects, respectively:

دردم ازیار است و درمان نیز هم در درمان نیز هم

My pain is from my friend, and my cure is from Him; May my heart and spirit be sacrificed for Him.

Ghazal 363. In Sāqī Nāmah he says,

در خاکروبان میخانه کوب ره میفروشان میخانه روب

مگر آب و آتش خواصت دهند زهستی به مستی خلاصت دهند که حافظ چه بر عالَر جان رسید چهاز خودبرون شدبه جانان رسید

> Knock on the door of the tavern's dustman; Sweep the way of the tavern's barman.

> Their water and fire can only set you free, From nonbeing to inebriety, may that so be.

The realm of spirit when I reached myself, I reached the Beloved when I exited my self.

"The realm of spirit" (" $\overline{a}lam-ij\bar{a}n$) in the above poem refers to the realm of immaterial intellects ($jabar\bar{u}t$), and "the Beloved" ($j\bar{a}n\bar{a}n$) refers to the realm of the Divine Names ($l\bar{a}h\bar{u}t$).

In the text, the detachment of the spirit from the body is when one detaches from the body and enters the realm of immaterial intellects, the $jabar\bar{u}t$. Likewise, the detachment of the spirit from the spirit is when one detaches from the realm of immaterial intellects and reaches the Spirit of spirits, which is called $j\bar{a}n\bar{a}n$ (the Beloved).

[tr: Malakūt, jabarūt and lāhūt refer to three degrees of immateriality beyond the corporeal world. The natural or corporeal world is the realm of existents that are material both in their essence and in their actions. Above that in terms of immateriality is the imaginal world, also called malakūt, which is the realm of existents that are immaterial in their essence but not in their actions. There is no matter in the realm of malak ut, but there are forms and shapes (attributes of matter). Above that is the realm of immaterial intellects, which is the realm of existents that are immaterial both in their essence and in their actions. It is called the realm of jabar ut (invincibility) as the beings in it are superior to and dominant over the beings of the lower planes of existence. Finally, there is lāhūt, which is beyond immateriality, and signifies the realm of the Divine Names. Note that the translation of malak ut as the realm of angels is based on the literal root of the word; otherwise, angels are often associated with higher planes of existence. Also, these terms may have other definitions, and are sometimes used interchangeably in certain contexts or topics.

15. Narrated from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) in Miṣbāḥ al-sharīʿah, section 23; al-Shahīd al-Thānī, Munyat almurīd, p. 133; Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, 'Awālī al-la ʾālī, 1:81 and 380. Majlisī has quoted it from these three sources in Biḥār al-anwār, 67:210-211 and 67:249.

[tr: This is one of the most famous narrations among the Muslims, and is the first tradition in Ṣaḥāḥ al-Bukhārī, reported from 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. See note 21 below for a detailed discussion on this narration. Also, note that 'Awālā al-la 'ālā ("Superior Pearls") is sometimes written as Ghawālā al-la 'ālā ("Precious Pearls"), which is more sensible and correct. The editor used to write it by the latter spelling, but the former is more commonly used.]

The outward and inward dimensions of the Quran

16. This tradition has been narrated by Sunni authorities, as mentioned in the fourth introduction of Muḥammad ibn Murtaḍa (Mullā Muḥsin) Fayḍ al-Kāshānī, *Tafsīr al-ṣāfī*, 1:31. There are also some Shia narrations in this regard:

O, people! Truly you are in a time of peace and respite... For it [the Quran] there is an outward dimension and an inward dimension: Its outward dimension is wisdom, and its inward dimension is knowledge; its outward dimension is splendid, and its inward dimension is deep. It has [guiding] stars, and there are [more] stars above those stars [or guiding those stars. In another version: It has limits, and there are limits beyond those limits].

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 89:17, quoted from 'Ayyāshī, Kitāb al-tafsīr, 1:2-3.

O, Jābir! Truly the Quran has an inward dimension, and its inward dimension has an inward dimension. It also has an outward dimension, and its outward dimension has an outward dimension...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 89:91 and 95, quoted respectively from Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 2:300, and 'Ayyāshī, Kitāb al-taſsīr, 1:11. Barqī has narrated from Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju'fī, from Imām Bāqir, while 'Ayyāshī has reported from Jābir, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon them).

In another narration, Fudayl ibn Yasār asked Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him) about [the meaning of] this narration: "There is no verse of the Quran that does not have an outward dimension and an inward dimension." The Imām replied,

سَأَلُتُ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ (عليه السلام) عَنْ هَذِهِ الرِّوَايَةِ: مَا مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ آيَةُ إِلَّا وَ لَمَا ظَهْرُ وَ بَطْنُ. فَقَالَ: ظَهْرُهُ تَنْزِيلُهُ وَ بَطْنُهُ تَأْوِيلُهُ.

Its outward dimension is its tanzīl (descension, the apparent words that were descended), and its inward dimension is its ta lvīl (interpretation, its hidden meaning).

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 89:97, quoted from Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾīr al-darajāt, p. 216.

17. Ghazzālī, *lḥyā³ ʿulūm al-dīn*, 6:92; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 67:71, reported from Sabzawārī, *Jāmi ʿal-aklibār*, p. 269.

Narrations about the greater struggle

The above narration has been reported from three of the Imāms (Imāms Ṣādiq, Kāzim and Riḍā).

1. The narration from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) is:

The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) dispatched an army [for a battle]. When they returned, he said, "Bravo to a group that has fulfilled the lesser struggle, and what remains for them [to fulfill] is the greater struggle." He was asked, "O Messenger of God, what is the greater struggle? He said, "Combating the soul."

Mufid, al-lkhtiṣāṣ, p. 240. It is also reported with minor differences in Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 67:71, quoted from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 5:12, reported with its chain of transmission. The same narration has been reported from Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon him) in Rāwandī, al-Nawādir, p. 142.

2. It has also been reported from Imām Kāzim, from his fathers, from Imām 'Alī (peace be upon them), except that it says, "...and what remains upon them is the greater struggle," and at the end of the narration there is the following addition:

ثُمَّ قَالَ (صلَّى الله عليه و آله وسلم) أَفْضَلُ الْجِهَادِ مَنْ جَاهَدَ نَفْسَهُ الَّتِي بَيْنَ جَنْبَيهِ.

Then he (peace be upon him and his family) said, "The best struggle is [that of] one who combats his soul which is between his sides [i.e. his internal enemy]."

Majlisī, Bihār al-anwār, 67:65, quoted from Ṣadūq, al-Amālī, p. 553, and Ma ānī al-akhbār, p. 160, reported with its chain of transmission. However, the addition in Ma ānī al-akhbār has "peace be upon him" instead of "peace be upon him and his family," which means that the addition is by Imām Kāzim (peace be upon him). This is more probable [than the addition being the words of the Prophet] because the previous narration by Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) did not have this addition. It might have been that Imām Kāzim (peace be upon him) added this point as an explanation to the words of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family).

3. Finally, it has been narrated from Imām Riḍā (peace be upon him):

نَزُوِي أَنَّ سَيِنَنَارَسُولَ اللهِ (صلّى الله عليه و آله وسلّم) رَأَى بَعْضَ أَصْحَابِهِ مُنْصَرِفاً مِن بَعْثِكَانَ بَعَثَهُ، وَقَدِ الْصَرَفَ بِشَعَيْهِ وَغُبَارِ سَفَرِهِ وَسِلَا حُهُ عَلَيْهِ بُرِيدُ مَنْزِلَهُ. فَقَالَ (صلّى الله عليه و آله و سلّم): الْصَرَفْتَ مِنَ الْجِهَادِ الْأَصْغَرِ إِلَى الْجِهَادِ الْآكْبَرِ. فَقِيلَ لَهُ: أَ وَجِهَادُ فَوْقَ الْجِهَادِ بِالسَّيْفِ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ، جِهَادُ الْمُرُهِ نَفْسَهِ.

We are told that once our master, the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family), saw one of his Companions returning from a mission on which he had been dispatched by the Prophet. He was returning from the trip disheveled and covered with dust, while carrying his weapon and heading for his house. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) told him, "You have returned from the lesser combat to turn to the greater combat." He was asked, "Is there any combat superior to the combat of the swords?" He said, "Yes: combating one's self."

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 67:68, quoted from ʿAlī ibn Mūsa al-Riḍā, Fiqh al-Riḍā, p. 380.

18. Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him) said,

Truly God has elevated faith $(\bar{\imath}m\bar{a}n)$ a degree above submission $(isl\bar{a}m)$ as He has elevated the Ka^cbah a degree above the Holy Mosque.

Kulaynī, al-Kājī, 2:52, reported with a connected chain of transmission from Humrān ibn A^c yan.

The definition of a believer

19. A believer is one who holds God as the only object of worship—in his speeches, acts and beliefs, within and without. That is because there is no god but God:

He is the All-Living One; there is no god but He. So call unto Him, with your religion being sincerely for Him... (40:65)

Thus, it is prohibited to have any other god:

And call not unto any other god along with God. There is no god but He... (28:88)

It does not matter whether this other god is Satan or the desires of one's base soul—which are the instruments and armies of Satan. It could also be an idol that has no sense or understanding, like what the tribe of Moses requested from him:

...They [the Children of Israel] said, "O Moses, make for us a god, as they have gods [i.e. idols]."... (7:138)

It could be another human being, from whom one hopes to acquire some wealth or position, or from whom one is afraid, such as Pharaoh who considered himself as a god and called Moses to worship him:

He [Pharaoh] said, "If thou takest a god other than me, I shall surely make thee one of the prisoners." (26:29)

Sometimes one might worship other human beings thinking that this is the means to reach Paradise, spiritual stations or God's forgiveness. This was the case with some Christians [and Jews]:

They [the Christians] have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from God, and the Messiah—son of Mary... (9:31)

One's wealth and children could also become one's gods, for anything that distracts one from God is one's object of worship:

O believers, let not your wealth nor your children distract you from the remembrance of God... (63:9)

Finally, one's god might be his desire for food or women, as the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) described the people that will come at the end of the world to Ibn Mascūd:

Their stomachs become their gods...and their women become their niches of worship (sing. milrāb).

Al-Ḥasan ibn al-Fadl Tabrisī, Makārim al-akhlāq, p. 449.

20. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:46, reported from Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him) through Muḥammad ibn Khālid, with an unconnected chain of transmission (marfū'). This is a part of a narration from Imām 'Alī concerning the meaning of submission (islām). We will mention the full narration later on, in the section on greater submission (see note 14 on Chapter 4).

The narration, "Acts are only by intentions"

21.

Acts are only by intentions, and for each person is only what he intends. Thus, whoever migrated toward God and His Messenger, then his migration is toward God and His Messenger; and whoever migrated to obtain this world or marry a woman, then his migration is toward what he migrated to.

The late al-Shahīd al-Thānī has reported the above narration with the following explanation:

This narration is the first basis and a fundamental pillar of Islam. It has been described as one third of knowledge [in terms of practical significance]. Some scholars have justified this claim by

saying that the actions of a servant [in the most general sense] are either through his heart, his tongue or his limbs. Therefore, intention [which is an act of the heart] is one of the three means of action. In fact it is the highest type of actions, because it can be an act of worship by itself, as opposed to the other two types. Many of the scholars of the past and their followers used to begin their books with this narration in order to remind their readers to pay attention to their intention, and try to rectify it and make it pure.

Munyat al-murīd, p. 133. Majlisī has quoted it in Biliār al-anwār, 67:249 from Munyat al-murīd, and in 67:211 from Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, 'Awālī al-la ʾālī, 2:11.

However, this narration has not been reported in any of the main Shia books of hadith (tradition). It is clear that the late al-Shahīd al-Thānī and Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥṣā'ī have quoted it from the Sunni books, as their custom was to not limit themselves to Shia sources when it came to ethical narrations.

The narration has been reported in slightly different versions by the main Sunni authorities of hadith, such as Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 1:2, 3:119 and 7:231; Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 6:48; Nasāʾī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī, 1:58-60, 6:158-159 and 7:13; Tirmidhī, Sunan al-Tirmidhī, 3:100; Ibn Mājah, Sunan Ibn Mājah, 2:1413; and Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 1:25. They have all reported the narration with a connected chain of transmission from Yaḥya ibn Saʿīd, from ʿAlqamah ibn Waqqāṣ, from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

[tr: Note that this narration—especially the first part of it—is also reported in the main Shia books of hadith, sometimes with slight differences. See Tusī, Tahdhīb al-aḥlām, 1:83 and 4:186, al-Amālī, p. 618; Nuʿmān ibn Muḥammad, Da ʿā ʾm al-Islām, 1:156. Also see Ṭabāṭabāʾī, al-Mīzān, 2:390 and 6:187.]

22. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:396, reported with a connected chain of transmission from Misma' ibn 'Abd al-Malik, from Imām Ṣādiq, from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family). The narration as reported in al-Kāfī says, "...beyond what is in the heart..."

The elimination of one's natural faculties vs. the elimination of one's self and desires

Entering the realm of tawhīd does not hinge upon the elimination of the natural faculties, but it hinges upon passing the realm of one's self and desires.

It is seen in the writings of many great figures of ethics and mysticism that entering the realm of tawhīd (unity) and gaining dominance over the realms of forms and intellects (mithāl and figl) hinge upon the

weakening and elimination of the natural faculties. However, such a statement should not be misunderstood. Some people might be under the impression that it is impossible to reach elevated spiritual stations as long as one is in the corporeal world, eats food, walks in the markets, and has the natural faculties of his soul. This is not true. It is rather possible to reach every level of the supernatural world and attain the stations of the heart, intellect, and absolute unity while one is in this world. One can indeed experience the "death of" (i.e. passing through) the realms of nature, forms and immaterial intellects in his life, and go through his lesser, intermediate and greater inward resurrections. One can pass all these stages while he works, trades, and forms a family in this world. This would be through combating the evil commanding soul, whereby one can pass through the barzakh (the intermediate world after death and before resurrection), the questioning of the two angels in the grave, the Resurrection, the Day of Judgment, the standing in front of God, the Reckoning (hisab), the Scale (mīzān), the Books (kitāb), the Bridge (sirāt), the Wall between Paradise and Hell (a raf), intercession (shafā'ah), the Garden and the Fire. Once one passes through these stages, he can enter Paradise without any question or reckoning.

...Thus they shall enter Paradise, where they will receive provision without reckoning. (40:40)

This is the meaning of the following narration by the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family):

مُوثُواقَبُلَأَن تُمُوثُوا.

Die before you die.

Rāzī, Mirṣād al-Sbād, pp. 201, 205 and 219. Likewise are these words of Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him):

...Remove your hearts from this world before your bodies are removed from it...

Nahj al-balāghah, Sermon 203. More explicit than these two narrations is to be found in the words of God to the Prophet in his Ascension (mi faj). It is a long narration where God addresses His Messenger as "O Aḥmad." A part of this narration describes the friends and lovers of God as follows:

قَدْصَارَتِ الدُّنْيَا وَ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَهُمْ وَاحِلَّةً؛ يَمُوتُ النَّاسُ مَرَّةٌ وَيَمُوتُ أَحَدُهُمْ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمِ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً مِنْ مُجَاهَنَ ۚ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمُحَالَقَةِ هَوَاهُمْ...

This world and the Hereafter have become equal to them. [Other] people die [only] once, but they [the righteous people and the seekers of the Hereafter] die seventy times every day because of combating their [base] souls and opposing their desires...

فَوَعِزْتِي وَجَلَالِي لَأُخِيِنَهُمْ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً إِذَا فَارَقَتْ أَرْوَاحُهُمْ مِن جَسَدِهِمْ، لَا أُسَلِّطُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَلَكَ الْوَتِ وَلَا يَلِي قَبْضَ رُوحِهِمْ غَيْرِي، وَلَا تُعَمَّلُ لِرُوحِهِمْ أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ كُلَّهَا وَلَا رَفَعَنَ الْمُجُبَكُلَّهَا دُونِي...

By My Might and Majesty, I will surely have them live a good life when their spirits exit their bodies. I will not give the Angel of Death dominance over them; no one shall seize their spirits but Me. I will surely open every gate of the heavens on their spirits, and will surely remove every veil that blocks them from Me...

وَلَا يَكُونُ يَنِيٰ وَبَيْنَ رُوحِهِ سِنَّى.. وَأَفْتُحُ عَيْنَ قَلِيهِ وَسَمْعِهِ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ بِقَلْبِهِ وَيَنْظُرَ بِقَلْبِهِ إِلَى جَلَا لِي وَعَظَمَتِي... وَأُسْمِعُهُ كَلَامِي وَكَلَامَ مَلَا يُصَتِي وَأُعَرِّفُهُ الشِّرَ الَّذِي سَتَرَّتُهُ عَنْ خَلْقِي.

There will be no cover between any of them and Me... I shall open the eye of his heart and his hearing, so that he would hear and see My majesty and magnificence with his heart... I shall make him hear My speech and the speech of My angels, and I will make known to him the secret that I concealed from my creatures...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 74:24-25 and 28-29. Thus, it would be more appropriate to talk about this [death] as passing over the realm of one's self and desires [as opposed to passing over the corporeal world and the natural faculties].

Notes on Chapter Four

- In order to ascend to a realm, one should first traverse every plane and degree that precedes that realm. There is no doubt that one cannot climb up to any realm unless he has first completed his journey through every degree and level of its preceding realm. There are two points to be noted here:
 - 1. The above is true about entering a realm as a permanent station (maqām), not as a temporary state (hā). One might merely get a glimpse of a higher realm and experience some of its states and features for a short period of time even though he is still in the lower realm and has not yet completed his journey there. For example, if someone wants to be stationed in the realm of intellect (aql), then he must have passed over every plane of the realm of forms (mithā); yet, it is possible for someone who has not done so to experience some of the aspects and properties of the realm of intellect. This equally applies to the other realms.
 - 2. Completing a realm and leaving it behind does not mean that the person should know every characteristic and property of that realm. Some people may very well pass the realm of forms without a detailed experience of imaginal unveilings (al-mukāshafāt al-ṣūriyyah). They might only see some of these images and forms in their dreams, or they might only see the imaginal form of a past or future event. Thus has been the case of the late Shaykh Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn al-Salmāsī (d. 1266/1850). He was a close student of the late Sayyid Baḥr al-ʿŪlūm and kept his company in private and public. It is narrated from the late Sayyid ʿAlī Qāḍī (may God be pleased with him) that every unveiling that al-Salmāsī experienced occurred in his dreams. Of course, one cannot do without an overall knowledge of a realm and some unveiling of its characteristics in order to complete that realm and pass to the next.

A few notes on the author's classification of the realms before the realm of sincerity

What the late author has discussed here about the necessary order and sequence of the realms in one's ascent or descent is not specific to the realm of sincerity (although he has mentioned it in this context). Instead, it is a general and universal rule that applies to every realm, including the realms before and after sincerity.

Among the realms preceding the realm of sincerity are the three realms of nature, forms and intellects. The twelve realms that the author talks about later on fall under these three main realms. [tr: That is, each of those twelve realms has some application and instance for each of these three realms.]

The order of these three realms have been rationally demonstrated and explained by the late Mullā Ṣadrā. See Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, Asfār, 9:194ff and al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah, p. 320ff.

Likewise, the perfect mystic, the late Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Malikī Tabrīzī has discussed and proven the order of these three realms toward the end of his treatise on the vision of God. See Malikī Tabrīzī, Risālahyi liqā Allāh p. 211.

He has also talked about this in a letter that he wrote to the late Ayatullah Muḥammad Ḥusayn Gharawī Iṣfahānī:

As with contemplation (fikr), he [i.e. the late Ākhūnd Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī, who was the spiritual master of the late Malikī Tabrīzī] used to instruct the beginners to start with thinking about death. A beginner would do so until he became dumbfounded due to this persistent contemplation. At that point, the master would turn the person's attention to the imaginal world, or the person would turn toward it on his own. So he would contemplate a few days and nights about how anything that he perceives or conceives is himself and nothing outside himself. Once he had a good grip on this, the master would instruct him to change his thinking: to wipe out every form and image from his mind, and to contemplate about nonexistence.

If one masters this stage, then the Sultan of Gnosis [i.e. the unveiling of God's unity] will manifest for that person. That is, he would observe the light of his own reality at its utmost brilliance, without any forms or limits. It is better if one makes this observation at a state of absorption (jadhbah) and after having found out how to climb up the higher realms.

The more one journeys, the more he will achieve. Due to the order of the realms, one should first pass the natural realms into the realm of forms, and then pass over to the realm of spirits and genuine lights. Of course, you are more familiar with the philosophical proofs of this. It is interesting how these stages have been explicitly mentioned in the prostration that is recommended on the night of 15 Shaʿbān:

سَجَدَلَكَ سَوَادِي وَخَيَالِي وَبَيَاضِي.

My blackness, my imagination and my whiteness have prostrated only for Thee.

[Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, Wasāʾīl al-Shīʿah, 8:108, with slight differences.]

True gnosis is achieved only when annihilation at all three levels has been achieved. After all, the reality of prostration is annihilation. It is upon total detachment from the soul (nafs) that one achieves everlasting subsistence by God (al-baqā²bi-Allāh).

See Husaynī Tihrānī, Matla-i anwār, 3:31-32.

3. The late author has classified the realms that precede the realm of sincerity into four realms: submission (islām), faith (īmān), migration (hijrah) and struggle (jihād). He has then classified each of them into three levels: lesser (asphar), greater (akbar), and greatest (a zam). That makes up twelve realms in total.

After these realms, the wayfarer will enter the realm of sincerity, in which he should journey for forty days in order to actualize every potentiality of that realm. According to the author, the narration, "Whoever makes [himself] sincere for God for forty days..." refers to one's journey in the realm of sincerity, and the emergence of the fountains of wisdom refers to subsistence after annihilation (al-baqā' ba'd al-fanā'), which is the same as subsistence by God.

The author has provided a series of very interesting and delightful evidence to prove this interpretation. Indeed one can say that a book with this style and classification of the stages and realms of the spiritual journey is something unprecedented.

Meanwhile, there are a few points to be noted here, and God knows best:

1. The first point concerns the author's interpretation of the twelve realms. When he discusses these realms in detail later on, he regards the realms of lesser migration and lesser struggle (al-hijrat al-sughrá and al-jahād al-aṣghar) as parts of the realm of greater faith (al-mān al-akbar). Then, in order to maintain a total of twelve realms, he adds one realm of success and victory (fath wa anfar) after the greater struggle (al-jihād al-akbar) and another realm of success and victory after the greatest struggle (al-jihād al-a - zam).

I, the lowest being, do not understand the wisdom behind this. It might be because the lesser migration and the lesser struggle are not applicable at the time of the Occultation (ghaybah) of the Imām. A wayfarer living at the time of Occultation cannot perform them. Thus, the realms should be adjusted in order to match and conform to such a condition. As a result, these two realms are considered

among the overall requirements of the realm of greater faith. However, such a justification is not valid due to the following reasons:

- a. The author himself has explicitly prescribed substitutes for the lesser migration and the lesser struggle, for cases where one is not able to perform them. The substitute for the lesser migration is to migrate away both inwardly and outwardly from sinners and the people of this world. The substitute for the lesser struggle is to command what is good and forbid what is evil.
- b. He has also mentioned that the realms are in sequence, like the day and night, and as long as one has not fully passed a lower realm he cannot enter a higher one.

It thus follows that one cannot reach perfection while dispensing with the lesser migration and the lesser struggle altogether. They are required for one's spiritual perfection in one way or another. A wayfarer cannot benefit from every level of perfection unless he has performed these two tasks, whether his Imām is present or absent. That is how God has created the human soul: In order to actualize all of its potentialities, it needs to perform the lesser migration and the lesser struggle. Otherwise, even if the soul passes over to the other realms and journeys through them, it would be incomplete in these two aspects.

It has been narrated from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) that he said,

One who dies while he has neither fought nor thought about [or intended] it in his mind, dies in a branch of hypocrisy.

Nasā'ī, Sunan al-Nasā'ī, 6:8. A similar story is that of marriage. It involves certain difficulties, distractions and obstructions, but the wayfarers who do not ever get married in their life will lose a whole realm of perfection that can be achieved only through marriage. It is for this reason that the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) identified marriage as his way and tradition (Ṭabrisī, Makārim al-akhlāq, p. 196).

For instance, if someone is deprived of vision, then regardless of how far he goes in his spiritual journey, he will be deprived of seeing the visual manifestations of God. Even reaching annihilation in the Divine Essence and entering that sanctuary will not be a substitute for this deficiency. Such a person will forever be deprived of seeing the external and apparent lights that God has placed in the objects of sight. Likewise is the case of being de-

prived of hearing, and so forth. In general, to miss a sense means to have the gates of a great realm shut on the individual.

[tr: This point by the late editor might need some clarification: If an act or experience is a necessary requirement for a higher experience or realization, then that higher experience or realization would not be achieved in the absence of that requirement. However, there are some acts that although they are helpful for certain people or in certain circumstances, they are not universally necessary requirements for advancement to higher realizations. In other words, there are substitutes for the impact that they have on one's perfection and spiritual journeying. Also, a person might indeed lack a particular experience such as vision or marriage in this world, but if he reaches certain divine stations and transcendent pleasures, he might no longer need those preliminary particular experiences. That is because those acts or experiences were only the means to achieve this end, without any intrinsic value associated with them. As Rumī says, "When you've got a hundred, you've also got ninety" (Mathnawi, vol. 1, line 1114). This person's deprivation of certain particular experiences in the corporeal world would not cause any deficiency or imperfection for him. Overall, one should determine whether an act or experience is a necessary condition for advancing on the spiritual path or not. If it is, then it cannot be dispensed with, and without it, the higher perfections will not be realized in the first place.]

- c. The realm of success and victory is not a particular realm to be considered along with the other realms. Rather, it is a necessary consequence of the completion of jihad and entrance into the next realm. Otherwise, we could also mentally divide the realm of success and victory into two realms: one being success and the other being victory—because after all, a wayfarer will first succeed in his struggle and then become victorious over the enemy.
- 2. The second point concerns the author's interpretation of the narration, "Whoever makes [himself] sincere for God for forty days..."

 The narration talks about observing sincerity for forty days, which would be something that the wayfarer does voluntarily and by his free will. However, according to the author, one should do the forty-day journey (arba m) after he enters the realm of sincerity and becomes one of the most sincere servants of God (mukhla sin). But it is evident that once a wayfarer enters the realm of sincerity, he will have no free will or choice to observe an arba m anymore. In that realm, God is the one who decides for the person, and it is God Who moves him on the path. The only other explanation is to say that "making one's self sincere" is used here only for the lack of a better

- expression [otherwise it is not meant literally]. That is, the central theme of the narration is the forty-day journey [which is by God and not by one's free-will].
- According to the author's interpretation of the aforementioned narration, reaching the station of subsistence by God (after one's annihilation) is also by the person's choice and free-will [which contradicts annihilation in the first place].
- 4. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:173.

The meaning of sharī cah and tarīqah

- 5. Sharī ah (shariah) means observance of the outward or exoteric laws, while tarīqah means observance of the inward or esoteric laws. If what the author intends here is only the outward aspects of these four realms, then migration would also be a part of the shariah, not the borderline between the shariah and the tarīqah If what he intends is both the outward and the inward aspects of these realms, then faith would be a part of the tarīqah alone, because faith as a whole includes some hidden aspect that cannot be classified under the shariah. However, it seems that what the author intends is to only present a brief overview of the realms, not a detailed and differentiated view. [tr: Apparently the reason why the author has defined migration as the borderline between the shariah and the tarīqah is that he has classified the outward aspects of migration and struggle (called the lesser migration and the lesser struggle) as parts of the realm of faith.]
- 6. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:28, reported from Samā^cat ibn Mihrān, from Imām Şādiq (peace be upon him).

Narrations about how faith encompasses Islam, but not vice versa

There are many narrations indicating that Islam does not include faith, but faith includes Islam. See Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:25-27; Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:285. Other than the narration quoted in the text, there are three narrations that use the simile of the Kacbah and the haram:

1. Abū al-Şabāḥ al-Kanānī narrated from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him):

قَالَ: مَا تَقُولُ فِيمَز أَخِدَتَ فِي الْمُسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ مُتَعَفِداً؟ قَالَ قُلْتُ: يُضْرَبُ ضَرَا شَدِيداً. قَالَ: أَصَبْتَ أَلا تَرَى أَنَّ أَصَبْتَ أَلا تَرَى أَنَّ أَصَبْتَ أَلا تَرَى أَنَّ الْصَبْتَ أَلا تَرَى أَنَّ

...The Imām asked me, "What do you say about one who deliberately defecates in the Holy Mosque?" I answered, "He should be severely beaten." He said, "That is correct. Now, what do you say about one who deliberately defecates in the Kaʿbah?" I replied, "He should be killed." He said, "That is correct. As you see, the Kaʿbah is superior to the Mosque. Indeed the Kaʿbah shares the properties of the Mosque, but the Mosque does not share the properties of the Kaʿbah. Likewise, faith shares the properties of Islam, but Islam does not share the properties of faith."

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:26; Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:285.

2. Humrān ibn A'yan narrated:

...كَمَاصَارَتِ الْكَعْبَةُ فِي الْسَجِدِ وَالْسَجِدُ لَيْسَ فِي الْكَعْبَةِ، وَكَذَلِكَ الْإِيمَانُ يَشْرَكُ الْإِسْلَامَ وَ الْإِسْلَامُ لَا يَشْرَكُ الْإِيمَانِ...

I heard Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him) saying, "... As the Kabah is inside the Mosque but the Mosque is not inside the Kabah, so is faith a part of Islam but Islam is not a part of faith..."

[The Imam then goes on talking about faith and Islam in detail, until the end of the narration where he says,]

أَرَأَيْتَ لَوْيَصُرْتَ رَجُلاً فِي الشَّجِيرَا كُنْتَ ثَمْهَدُ أَنْكَ رَأَيْتَهُ فِي الْكَعْبَةِ؟ قُلْتُ: لَا يَجُوزُ لِي ذَلِكَ. قَالَ: وَ قَالَ: فَلَوْ بَصُرْتَ رَجُلاً فِي الْكَعْبَةِ أَكُنْتَ شَاهِداً أَنَّهُ قَدْ دَخَلَ الْمَشْجِدَ الْحُوامَ؟ قُلْتُ: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: وَ كَنْتَ شَاهِداً أَنَّهُ قَدْ دَخَلَ الْمَشْجِدَ. فَقَالَ: قَدَ أَصَبْتُ وَ كَيْفَ ذَلِكَ؟ قُلْتُ: قَدَ أَصَبْتُ وَ كَيْفَ ذَلِكَ؟ قُلْتُ: فَقَالَ: قَدَ أَصَبْتُ وَ كَيْفُ ذَلُولِ الْكَعْبَةِ عَتَى يَدْخُلُ النَّشِجِدَ. فَقَالَ: قَدَ أَصَبْتُ وَ أَحْدَنْتَ. ثُمُّ قَالَ: كَذَلِكَ الْإِسْلَامُ.

"Look, if you see a man in the Mosque, would you bear witness that you saw him in the Kabah?" I replied, "It is not permissible for me to say so." The Imām said, "Now, if you see a man in the Kabah, would you bear witness that he has entered the Holy Mosque?" I said, "Yes." He said, "How come?" I answered, "Because he cannot enter the Kabah unless he first enters the Mosque." The Imām said, "Very good; you are right; and so is the case of faith and Islam."

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:26.

 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-Qaṣīr says, "I sent a letter to Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) through 'Abd al-Malik ibn A'yan, asking him about faith. He wrote in reply:

May God have mercy upon you. You had asked about faith... [until the end of the letter where the Imām says:] It is like the case of a person who enters the *haram*, then he enters the Kabah, and then he defecates in the Kabah. He will be beheaded once he exits the Kabah and the *haram*, and will be sentenced to Hell.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:27-28.

7. The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) said,

Shall I not inform you who a believer is? A believer is one who is trusted by the believers regarding their wealth and their affairs. A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe [in peace]. A migrant is one who migrates away from sins and abandons what God has made forbidden upon him.

Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:285, reported from Abū al-Numān, from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him).

Narrations about the Five Pillars of Islam

8. "The Five Pillars" (al-da Tim al-khams) is an expression that refers to prayer, fasting, almsgiving, pilgrimage and guardianship. This is found in a narration from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him):

Islam has been built on five [pillars]: prayer, almsgiving, fasting, pilgrimage and guardianship, and nothing has been called toward as guardianship has been.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:18, reported from Fuḍayl ibn Yasār, from Abū Ḥamzah; Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:286, reported from Ibn Maḥbūb, from Abū Ḥamzah. Both of these sources have reported several other narrations along the same lines from Imāms Bāqir and Ṣādiq (peace be upon them), with various chains of transmission. All of these narrations identify the pillars of Islam as the five mentioned above, and emphasize that most important of all is guardianship (wilāyah). Some of them literally use the expression al-da ʿāʾīm al-khams ("the Five Pillars").

However, what the author means by the Five Pillars here does not seem to include guardianship for the following reasons:

First: the Five Pillars are mentioned as the properties of the lesser submission, while guardianship pertains to the lesser faith, the greater submission or the greater faith.

Second: the Five Pillars that he mentions are to be carried out physically and by the bodily limbs, which is not applicable to guardianship.

Third: the narration that he cites later (from Sufyān ibn al-Simţ) mentions the two testimonies of faith as one of the pillars of Islam, instead of guardianship.

Thus, there is no doubt that what the author means by the Five Pillars here are the two testimonies of faith [as one pillar], prayer, fasting, almsgiving and pilgrimage.

As to what has been narrated from Sufyān ibn al-Simţ, the full narration is:

سَأَل رَجُلُ أَبَاعَبْدِ اللهِ (عليه السلام) عَنِ الْإِسْلام وَ الْإِيمَانِ مَا الْفَرَقُ بَيْنَهُمَا؟ فَلَمَ يُجِبْهُ ثُمَّ سَأَلَهُ فَلَمْ يُجِبْهُ ثُمَّ التَّقْيَا فِي الطَّرِيقِ وَقَدْ أَزِتَ مِنَ الرَّجُلِ الرَّحِيلُ. فَقَالَ لَهُ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللهِ (عليه السلام)؛ كَأَنَّهُ قَدْ أَزِتَ مِنْكَ رَحِيلُ؟ فَقَالَ: نَعَمْ فَقَالَ: فَلَقِي فِي الْبَيْتِ. فَلَقِيّهُ فَسَأَلَهُ عَنِ الْإِسْلام وَ الْإِيمَانِ مَا الْفَرَقُ بَيْنَهُمَا؟ فَقَالَ: الْإِسْلام مُو الظَّاهِ وَالنَّينِ عَلَيْهِ النَّالُ: شَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الله وَحْنَ لَا اللهُ وَحْنُ لَا اللهُ وَحْنَ لَا اللهُ وَعَنْ اللهُ مِنْ اللهُ وَاللهُ وَاللّهُ وَاللّهُ وَاللّهُ اللهُ وَاللّهُ مُولِكَةً وَإِيمَا اللّهُ مَا اللهُ مَا اللّهُ مَا اللّهُ مَا اللّهُ مَا اللّهُ اللهُ وَاللّهُ اللهُ مَا اللّهُ مَا اللّهُ مَا اللّهُ مَا اللّهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ مَن مَا اللّهُ مَلْ اللهُ اللهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ وَاللّهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللّهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللهُ اللّهُ الللّهُ اللّهُ اللهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ الللللّهُ اللللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ الللّهُ اللّهُ الللّهُ اللللّهُ الللللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ الللّهُ اللّهُ الللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ الللللّهُ الللللّهُ الللّهُ اللّهُ اللللّهُ اللللللّهُ الللّهُ الللّهُ اللللللّهُ الللللّهُ الللّهُ اللللللّهُ الللللّهُ الللللّهُ اللللللّهُ الللللّهُ الللللّهُ الللللّهُ الللللّهُ الللللللّهُ الللللللللّهُ الللللّهُ اللللللّهُ اللل

Someone asked Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) about Islam, faith, and the difference between the two. The Imām did not answer him. The man asked again, but the Imām did not answer him. Then they met outside in the street, while the man was about to leave the town. The Imām told him, "It seems like you are about to leave?" He said, "Yes." The Imām said, "Meet me inside." So the man came inside the Imām's house and asked him

about Islam, faith, and the difference between them. The Imām said, "Islam is what the people apparently and outwardly hold: testifying that there is no god but God and Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger, performing the prayer, paying the alms, performing the pilgrimage to the House, and fasting in the month of Ramaḍān. That is Islam. But faith is to also recognize this matter [i.e. our guardianship]. Thus, if one affirms the above but does not recognize this matter, he would only be a Muslim, and he would be astray."

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:24-25. According to this narration, belief in guardianship is only a requirement of faith and not Islam. The sufficient conditions for Islam are only the two testimonies [to the unity of God and the messengership of Muḥammad].

This apparent contradiction can be explained by comparing the Shia narrations above with the Sunni narrations in this regard. In his Ṣaḥāḥ, Muslim has reported four narrations from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family):

Islam has been built on five [pillars]: professing the unity of God, performing the prayer, paying the alms, fasting in the month of Ramaḍān, and pilgrimage.

Muslim, Ṣaḥāḥ Muslim, 1:34, reported with its chain of transmission from Sa^cd ibn ^cUbaydah, from Ibn ^cUmar.

Islam has been built on five [pillars]: worshipping God and rejecting other than Him, performing the prayer, paying the alms, pilgrimage to the House, and fasting in Ramaḍān.

lbid., reported with its chain of transmission from Sa^cd ibn ^cUbaydah, from Ibn ^cUmar.

Islam has been built on five [pillars]: testifying that there is no god but God and Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger,

performing the prayer, paying the alms, pilgrimage to the House, and fasting in Ramaḍān.

Ibid., reported with its chain of transmission from the great grandson of Ibn 'Umar, from his father, from Ibn 'Umar.

Someone asked 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Umar, "[Why] do you not fight?" He said, "I heard the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) saying, 'Truly Islam has been built on five [pillars]: testifying that there is no god but God, performing the prayer, paying the alms, fasting in Ramaḍān, and pilgrimage to the House.'"

lbid., 1:34-35, reported with its chain of transmission from Ḥanzalah, from 'Ikrimah ibn Khālid.

Thus, the Messenger of God has defined Islam based on the five elements mentioned in these narrations. The Sunnis have confined themselves to the apparent and outward profession of the two testimonies of faith. That is, they consider that the mere declaration of the prophethood of Muhammad is sufficient as a pillar of Islam, even if it involves rejecting the Prophet's command concerning guardianship. However, the Imams from of the Prophet's Household (peace be upon them) have interpreted the Prophet's narration as follows: Without accepting guardianship, the profession of God's unity and the prophethood of Muhammad is only a shell and appearance of Islam. The real profession of these two testimonies involves a profession of the guardianship of the Imams, because these professions are not separable from one another. The essence of Islam is based on guardianship, which is the key to God's unity in His Names, Attributes and Actions, and is also the heart and soul of prophethood. Hence, the abovementioned narrations from the Imams serve as the interpretations and exegesis of the Prophetic narrations concerning the Five Pillars of Islam.

The Golden Chain Tradition

Likewise is the difference in the various versions of the Golden Chain Tradition (hadith silsilat al-dhahab), which has been narrated in different ways.

First: some narrations are unconditional, such as:

God, Majestic is His Majesty, says: "There is no god but God" is My fortress, and whoever enters therein is saved from My punishment.

God—the Master of the Masters, Majestic and All-Mighty is He—said: Truly I am God, there is no god save Me. So whoever confirms My unity has entered My fortress, and whoever enters My fortress is saved from My punishment.

Şadūq, *Uyūn-i akhbār al-Riḍā*, 1:144, with its chain of transmission; Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, *al-Jawāhir al-saniyyah*, p. 147 (quoted from Ṣadūq's *'Uyūn*) and p. 156.

Second: in some narrations, one's acceptance of God's unity (tawlvid) should be accompanied by sincerity:

God, Majestic is His Majesty, said: Truly I am God, there is no god save Me, so worship Me. Whoever among you brings with himself a sincere testimony that "There is no god but God" enters My fortress. And whoever enters My fortress is saved from My punishment.

Ṣadūq, *ʿUyūn-i akhbār al-Riḍā*, 1:143, with its chain of transmission. Third: some narrations have interpreted sincerity as guardianship:

God, Glorified are His Names and Majestic is His Face, said, "Truly I am God, there is no god save Me alone. So worship Me, O My servants! One should know that whoever among you meets Me while sincerely testifying that 'There is no god but God' has indeed entered My fortress. And whoever enters My fortress is saved from My punishment."

قَالُوا: يَا ابْنَ رَسُولِ اللهِ، وَمَا إِخْلَاصُ الشَّهَادَةِ لِلَّهِ قَالَ: طَاعَةُ اللهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَوَلَا يَةِ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ (عليم النلام).

The Imām [Riḍā] was then asked, "O, son of Messenger of God! What does it meant to sincerely testify for God?" He replied, "Obedience to God and His Messenger, and [accepting] the guardianship of the Prophet's Household (peace be upon them)."

Tusī, al-Amālī, p. 589, with its chain of transmission.

[tr: There are two interpretations for the Face of God: 1. The face of a thing is that by which it encounters others. Thus, God's Face is His manifestations, by which He encounters His creation. This is how the author interpreted God's Face above (p. 19). 2. Sometimes what is meant by the face of someone is the whole person, because the face is a major part of the body. It is like a person's head, which is sometimes used to refer to the person. When we see a part of someone's body we do not say, "I saw him," but when we see his face we sometimes make this claim. One's face represents one's reality and essence, due to the union that exists between the body and the soul. Therefore, God's Face is sometimes a reference to His reality and Essence (which is Absolute Existence, the Infinite).]

Similarly, in some of these narrations, after Imām Riḍā (peace be upon him) quotes from God that "'There is no god but God' is My fortress," he calls the audience again and completes the narration by adding, "Given its conditions, and I [the Imām] am one of its conditions." Ṣadūq, Ma ʿānī al-akhbār, pp. 370-371, al-Tawḥīd, p. 25, al-Amālī, pp. 305-306 and Thawāb al-a māl, pp. 6-7; Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, al-Jawāhir al-saniyyah, pp. 222-2223, quoted from Ṣadūq's books.

Fourth: some narrations identify guardianship as the fortress:

God, Blessed and Exalted He is, says: The guardianship of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib is My fortress, and whoever enters My fortress is saved from My Fire.

Şadūq, al-Amālī, p. 306 and Maʿānī al-akhbār, p. 371; Ṭūsī, al-Amālī, p. 353, with a connected chain of transmission; Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, al-Jawāhir al-saniyyah, pp. 225 and 262, quoted from the Amālīs of Ṣadūq and Ṭūsī respectively.

It is clear that all of these narrations concern the same reality: submitting to the absolute will of God and confessing His absolute Lordship over every aspect of creation. What is meant in the narrations that only speak of "There is no god but God" as the fortress is the reality and

spirit of this formula, which of course would not make sense without sincerity and guardianship. The other narrations—that identify guardianship as the fortress or speak of guardianship as a condition of <code>tawhid</code>—only interpret and explicate the narrations of the first group, not that they introduce something new. Try to reflect upon this and comprehend it.

We somewhat elaborated on this topic here because the same procedure of combining seemingly contradictory narrations is applicable to many other subjects. There are many other topics where some narrations are concise and others detailed, or some are unconditional and others qualify them.

Itr: The Golden Chain tradition (hadith silsilat al-dhahab) is named as such because its chain of transmission includes seven Imams and the Prophet (peace be upon them), a connected chain of transmitters that are so noble that are alluded to as "gold," or perhaps because its chain of transmitters was literally written by gold. The story of its narration is that the Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mun summoned the Eighth Imam of the Shias, 'Alī ibn Mūsa al-Ridā, from Medina to Marw in northeast Iran. On the way, the Imam passed by the city of Nayshabur (Naysabur), which was a city of scholarship and knowledge at the time (it was a predominantly Sunni city, although Shiism and Sunnism were not as divided back then as they later became). He was riding a mule with a covered closed litter. As the Imam was about to leave Nayshabur, the major scholars of the city requested him and adjured him by his fathers to show them his face and to narrate a tradition from the Prophet for them. The Imam accepted and lifted up the covering. A large crowd of people and scholars had gathered around to see the Imam and listen to his speech. Once they were quiet, the Imam narrated:

My father al-Kāzim narrated to me, from his father Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, from his father Muḥammad al-Bāqir, from his father 'Alī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, from his father al-Ḥusayn, the martyr of Karba-lā', from his father 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family), from Gabriel, that the Lord of Might and Glory said, "'There is no god but God' is My fortress, so whoever says it enters My fortress, and whoever enters My fortress is saved from My punishment."

Then the Imām closed the cover again and set out on his ride. More than twenty thousand transmitters and scholars of tradition wrote this at the time (which itself could be a cause of the slight variations in its narration). In some narrations, when the mule set off, the Imām called out to some of the major scholars who were closer to him: "Given its conditions, and I am one of its conditions." It has also been narrated that one of the Sāmānī rulers of Persia ordered to have this tradition and its

chain of transmitters written with gold, and asked to have it buried with him after his death.

See Ṣadūq, 'Uyūm-i akhbār al-Riḍā, 1:144-145; Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh, al-Fuṣūl al-muhimmah, 2:1002-1003; Irbilī, Kashf al-ghummah, 3:100-102.]

9. In explaining the above verse (49:14), Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him) said,

Thus, it is a lie if one claims that they [the Bedouins] have embraced faith, and it is a lie if one claims that they have not embraced Islam.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:25.

- 10. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:24, reported from al-Qāsim al-Şayrafi, from Imām Şādiq (peace be upon him).
- Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:24-25, reported from Sufyān ibn al-Simţ, from Imām Şādiq (peace be upon him).
- 12. Imām Ṣādiq (or Imām Bāqir, peace be upon them) interpreted verses 2:138 and 2:256 as follows:

فِي قَوْلِ اللهِ عَزَّوَ جَلَّ (صِبْغَةَ اللهِ وَ مَن أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللهِ صِبْغَةً)، قَالَ: الصِّبْغَةُ هِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ. وَقَالَ فِي قَوْلِهِ عَزَّوَ جَلَّ (فَمَرْ يَكُفُرُ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَ يُؤْمِنَ بِاللهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْمُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى)، قَالَ: هِيَ الْإِيمَانُ.

"[That is] the color of God, and who is better than God at coloring?" (2:138). The Imām said, "The color is Islam."

"So whosoever disbelieves in idols and believeth in God, hath grasped the firmest handle" (2:256). He said, "That is faith."

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:14, reported from Muḥammad ibn Muslim, and also from 'Abd-Allāh ibn Sinān, each with a connected chain of transmission.

13. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:25.

Imam 'Ali's narration concerting the greater submission

14. The Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him) said,

لَأَنْسَبَنَ الْإِسْلَامَ نِسْبَةً لَا يَشْبُهُ أَحَدُّ قَبِلِي وَلَا يَشْبُهُ أَحَدُّ بَعْدِي إِلَّا بِمِثْلِ ذَلِكَ. إِنَّ الْإِسْلَامَ هُوَ التَّسْلِيمُ، وَالتَّصْدِيقُ هُوَ الْإِقْرَارُ، وَالْإِقْرَارُ هُوَ التَّصْدِيقَ هُوَ الْأَقْرَارُ، وَالْمُقَارُ، وَالْمُعَلَ هُوَ الْأَدَاءُ. إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ لَمْ يَأْخُذُدِينَهُ عَنْ رَأَيْدٍ، وَلَكِنْ أَتَاهُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَأَخَذَهُ. إِنَّ

الْؤَمِنَ يُرَى يَقِينُهُ فِي عَمَلِهِ، وَالْكَافِرَيْرَى إِنْكَارُهُ فِي عَمَلِهِ. فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيِّلِ مَا عَرَفُوا أَمْرَهُمُ (مَاعَرَفُواأَمْرَرَبِهِمْ). فَاعْتَبِرُوا إِنْكَارَالْكَافِرِينَ وَالْتَافِقِينَ بِأَعْمَالِهِمُ الْخَبِينَةِ.

I shall describe the "pedigree" of Islam by such a description that no one has described before me and no one shall describe after me—save by a description similar to this:

Truly Islam is but submission, and submission is but certitude, and certitude is but affirmation, and affirmation is but confession, and confession is but action, and action is but fulfillment. Truly a believer has not taken his religion based on his own opinion, instead it has come to him from his Lord and thus he has grasped on to it. Truly the certitude of a believer can be seen in his action, and the denial of a disbeliever can be seen in his action. By the One in Whose hand is my life, they did not realize their status [or the status of their Lord]. So recognize the denial of the disbelievers and the hypocrites through their vile actions.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:45-46; Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:222, reported by both with an unconnected chain of transmission (marfū'). [tr: Majlisī has interpreted "they did not realize their umūr (affairs, commands)" as follows: "The infidels or the hypocrites did not realize the affairs of their religion, whether in terms of belief or practice. Thus they strayed themselves and misguided others due to not following the Imāms of guidance and acquiring knowledge from them." Biḥār al-anwār, 65:313.]

A very similar version of this narration has been reported with its chain of transmission from Imām Ṣādiq, from his fathers, from Imām ʿAlī, in Ṣadūq, al-Amālī, p. 432. Shaykh ʿAbbās Qummī has reported the narration in Safīmat al-biḥār, 1:643-644, and has referred the reader to Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, Ibn Maytham, al-Shahīd al-Thānī and Majlisī for their commentaries on the narration. See Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah, 18:313-314; Baḥrānī, Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah, 5:308-309; al-Shahīd al-Thānī, Ḥaqāʾq al-mīnān, pp. 127-130; Majlisī. Biḥār al-anwār, 65:311-317. A summary of the narration has also been mentioned in Nahj al-balāghah, Saying 125:

I shall describe the "pedigree" of Islam in such a way that no one has described before me: Islam is but submission, and submission is but certitude, and certitude is but affirmation, and affirmation is but confession, and confession is but fulfillment, and fulfillment is but [righteous] action.

15. Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:390, reported from 'Abd-Allāh al-Kāhilī. The part of the narration that has been omitted in the text is:

...Then the Imām recited the verse, "But no, by thy Lord! They will not believe until they make thee the judge regarding their disputes, then do not find in themselves any discomfort due to thy decree, and submit with full submission" (4:65). Then he said, "You ought to have submission."

Imām Ṣādiq's narration concerning the reality of servitude (Subādiyyah).

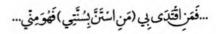
16. What is mentioned above complies with the narration of 'Inwān [or 'Unwān] al-Baṣrī, which describes servitude as a state of total obedience and complete submission. As long as one has not submitted himself to the utmost degree, and as long as one has not made his will and choice in line with the will and choice of God, that person has not entered the stage of servitude. 'Inwān al-Baṣrī's narration is a long one, where he narrates from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). There, 'Inwān asks the Imām, "O Abā 'Abd-Allāh, what is the reality of servitude?" The Imām says:

يَا أَبَا عَبْدِ اللهِ مَا حَقِيقَةُ الْعَبُودِيَّةِ؟ قَالَ: ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْيَاءَ: أَنْ لَا يَرَى الْعَبْدُ لِنَفْسِهِ فِيَا حَوَّلَهُ اللهُ بِهِ، وَلَا مِلْكَا، لِأَنَّ الْعَبِيدَ لَا يَكُونُ فَمْ مِلْكُ يَرُونَ الْمَالَ اللهِ يَضَعُونَهُ حَيْثُ أَمَرَهُمُ اللهُ بِهِ، وَلَا يُنْتَزُ الْعَبْدُ لِنَفْسِهِ تَدْبِيراً، وَجُمْلَةُ اشْتِغَالِهِ فِيمَا أَمْرَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى أِنْ يُنْفِقَ فِيهِ، وَ إِذَا فَوْضَ الْعَبْدُ عَوْلَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى مِلْكَ أَمْرَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى مِلْكَ أَمْرَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى مَلْكِ مَعْدَيْهِ الْإِنْفَاقُ فِيمَا أَمْرَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى أَنْ يُنْفِقَ فِيهِ، وَ إِذَا فَوْضَ الْعَبْدُ عَوْلَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى مِلْكَ عَلَيْهِ مَصَايِبُ الدُّنْيَا، وَإِذَا اشْتَغَلَ الْعَبْدُ بِهَا أَمْرَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى وَ فَهَاهُ لَا تَدْبِيرَ نَفْسِهِ عَلَى مُدَيِّرِهِ هَانَ عَلَيْهِ مَصَايْبُ الدُّنْيَا، وَإِذَا اشْتَغَلَ الْعَبْدُ بِهِا أَمْرَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى وَ فَهَاهُ لَا يَتَعْرَعُ مِنْهُمَا إِلَى الْمِرَاءِ وَ الْبُاهَاةِ مَعَ النَّاسِ. فَإِذَا آكْرَمَ اللهُ الْعَبْدُ بِهِذِهِ الثَّلَانَ عَلَيْهِ الدُّنْيَا وَ يَعْلَقُ أَنْ اللهُ الْعَبْدُ بِهِذِهِ الثَّلَانَةِ هَانَ عَلَيْهِ الدُّيُنَا وَ لَا يَطْلُبُ الدُّنْيَا وَ النَّالِ وَقَالَالُ لَوْ اللهُ الْعُبْدُ مِنْ اللهُ اللهُ الْمُولِةُ وَلَا يَطْلُبُ الدُّنِيَا وَلَا يَظْلُبُ مَا عِنْدَ النَّاسِ عِزَا وَعُلُوا أَنْ وَلَا يَطْلُبُ مَا عِنْدَالنَّاسِ عِزَا وَعُلُوا أَنْ وَلَا يَظْلُ فِيهُ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُدْ اللهُ اللهُ الْعَالَ اللهُ الْمُعْمَا اللهُ اللهُ الْمُنْ الْمُنْ اللهُ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللّالِ اللهُ الْمُنْ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ المُعْلَقُولُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ الْمُنْ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللّهُ اللّ

Three things: 1. A servant shall not see any ownership for himself in what God has bestowed upon him. That is because servants do not have any possessions. Instead, they see wealth as the wealth of God, and they use it as God has ordered. 2. A servant shall not make any plans for himself. 3. The sole engagement of a servant should be to observe the prescription and proscription of God, Exalted He is. Thus, when a servant does not see any ownership for himself in what God has bestowed upon him, it becomes easy for him to give charity in a cause that God has ordered. When a servant entrusts the direction and planning of himself to his Director and Planner, the tribulations of this world become easy for him. And when a servant engages himself in what God has prescribed and proscribed, he will have no time to boast or dispute with the people. When God honors a servant with these three, this world, Satan and the people become easy on him [i.e. he will not be troubled by these things]; he will neither seek this world to take pride in it, nor [will he seek it] in worldly rivalry with others; he will not seek what the people have for the sake of ascendancy or vainglory; and he will not pass his days in vain. That would be the first degree of self-restraint...

Majlisī. Biḥār al-anwār, 1:224-226. Some scholars have claimed that the content of this narration bears witness to its authenticity as the words of an Infallible Imām. As we see in this narration, true servitude is nothing but submission and obedience in every affair, including one's will and actions. Once these are accomplished, a wayfarer enters the first degree of self-restraint (taqwā), which would correspond to the greater faith according to the author's classification.

17. [tr: Apparently this is not exactly a Prophetic narration. However, it is narrated from the Prophet that



...Whoever follows me [or my Sunnah] belongs to me...

Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 5:409; 'Abd al-Razzāq ibn Hammām, al-Muṣannaf, 6:169; Muttaqī al-Ḥindī, Kanz al-ʿummāl, 1:184 and 8:244. Following the Prophet and his Sunnah is essentially the greater submission. It is also reported that some groups of early Muslims used to visit the Prophet, learn about Islam from him, and then return to their tribe to teach them what they were told by the Prophet. They used to tell their people, "Whoever embraces Islam belongs to us." See Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 11:50.]

18. The full verse is:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَلَ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَ الْكِتَابِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَكُفُرْ بِاللهِ وَمَلَانِكَتِهِ وَكُثْبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيُومِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالاً تِمِيداً.

O believers, believe in God and His Messenger and the Book that He hath sent down upon His Messenger and the Book that He sent down before. Whoso disbelieves in God and His angels and His Books and His messengers and the Last Day, hath surely wandered far astray. (4:136)

The greater submission and the greater faith in verse 39:22 19.

Is he whose breast God hath expanded for submission, so he followeth a light from his Lord [as one who is hard-hearted]?... (39:22)

According to this verse, Islam is the means for the expansion of one's breast by God, and the result of this expansion is that the person will have a light from his Lord. Thus, submission (Islam) here must be the greater submission, not the lesser submission, and not something general that includes both.

The greater faith is an advancement beyond the greater Islam. It is to move higher and above the stage of submission and obedience to the stage of yearning, satisfaction and zeal. In the Glorious Quran, the expansion of the breast (sharh al-ṣadr) refers to this advancement. "One whose breast God hath expanded for submission" means that initially there is submission, and then God expands and permeates that submission in the person's breast, which is equivalent to the greater faith. The author mentioned the same verse in his discussion on the greater submission, which is true only for the initial point in this verse [i.e. before the expansion].

20. One cannot take this verse (4:142) as a reference to the people of greater hypocrisy alone. In fact, the apparent context and trend of the verses before it only apply to the people of lesser hypocrisy:

الَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِمُ قَانِ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتَعُ مِنَ اللهِ قَالُوا الْمَرْنَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ وَإِنْ كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَسِيبُ قَالُوا الْمَرْنَسْتَغُوذُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعُكُمْ مِنَ الْغُومِنِينَ فَاللهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللهُ لِلْصَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلاً ﴿ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللهَ وَ هُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَ إِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كَسَالَى يُرَاوُونَ النَّاسَ وَ لَا يَذَكُرُونَ اللهَ إِلَّا قَلْبِلاً ﴿ مُذَبَنَبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ لَا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا لِللهِ فَلَنَ عَبِدَلَهُ سَبِيلاً.

Those who wait upon you and, if a victory cometh to you from God, say, "Were we not with you?" and if the disbelievers get a share, they say [to them], "Did we not cover you and protect you from the believers?"... * Indeed the hypocrites seek to trick God, but it is He Who is tricking them. When they stand up to pray they stand up without earnestness, showing off to the people and not remembering God but little * Wavering in between, [belonging] neither to these nor to those. He whom God leads astray, thou wilt not find a way for him. (4:141-143)

Meanwhile, since the verses of the Quran are broad and comprehensive, this verse—and other similar verses—could pertain to hypocrisy in general, including both the lesser and the greater forms of it. It would not be right, however, to limit the verse to the people of greater hypocrisy alone.

- 21. See p. 60 for what is meant by vain (laghtv).
- 22. The two narrations are reported respectively in Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:34 and 2:39. The first narration is over four pages long, reported from Abū 'Amr al-Zubayrī, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). The second narration is over one page long, reported from Ḥammād ibn 'Amr al-Naṣībī, from "the knowledgeable" (al-'ālim').

[tr: Apparently the second narration is also by Imām Ṣādiq, because he is referred to as al- ʿālim in the first narration as well. The two seem to be different variations of the same original tradition, where the second narration consists of only a part of the original. Also, what is mentioned in the text is only a summary of the two narrations, not an exact quotation.]

23. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:78, reported with a connected chain of transmission from Ibn Ri³āb, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). The rest of the narration is:

...Thus, adorn yourselves by it [self-restraint], so that God may have mercy upon you, and [use it to] put our enemies under pressure [or use it as your plot against our enemies], so that God may lift you up.

24. Jamīl ibn Darrāj narrated the following from Imām Şādiq (peace be upon them):

سَأَلَتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللهِ (عليه الشلام) عَنْ قَوْلِهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: (هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ الشَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ النُوْمِنِينَ)، قَالَ: هُوَ الْإِيمَانُ. وَعَنْ قَوْلِهِ: (وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلْمَةَ التَّقْوَى)، قَالَ: هُوَ الْإِيمَانُ. وَعَنْ قَوْلِهِ: (وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَى)، قَالَ: هُوَ الْإِيمَانُ.

I asked the Imām about ["composure" (sakīnah) in] the verse, "It is He Who sent down composure into the hearts of the believers" (48:4). He replied, "It means faith (īmān)."

Then I asked him about [spirit $(r\bar{u}h)$ in] the verse, "And He strengthened them by a spirit from Him" (58:22). He answered, "It means faith."

Then I asked him about [self-restraint (taqwa) in] the verse, "And He imposed on them the word of self-restraint" (48:26). The Imām said, "It means faith."

Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 2:15, with a connected chain of transmission. Kulaynī has reported another very similar narration on the same page, with a connected chain of transmission from Abū Ḥamzah, from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon them).

25. Kulaynī has reported three narrations that classify faith into seven portions in al-Kāfī, 2:42, 2:43 and 2:45. The first narration is reported from 'Ammār ibn Abī al-Aḥwaṣ, from Imām Ṣādiq; the second one from Ya'qūb ibn al-Daḥḥāk, from Imām Ṣādiq, through one of the Shias who was a servant of the Imām; and the third one from Sadīr, from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon them).

According to another narration by Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him), God divided faith into forty-nine parts, and divided each part into ten pieces. He then gave some people one piece (one-tenth of a part), some people two pieces, and so on up to a whole part. Then there are those with are given one part and a piece, those who are given one part and two pieces, and so on. The most perfect of people is one who has all forty-nine parts in full. At the end the Imām said,

If the people knew that God, the Mighty and Majestic, has created them as such, no one would blame anyone.

Ibid., 2:44, reported from Shihāb.

26. Ibid., 2:44-45. The omitted part of the narration is:

... فَلا يَقُولَنَّ صَاحِبُ الاِثْنَيٰ لِصَاحِبِ الْوَاحِدِ لَسَتَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ حَتَّى يَنْتُهِيَ إِلَى الْعَاشِرِ فَلاَ نُسْفِطُ مَنْ هُوَدُونَاتَ فَيُسْفِطَكَ مَنْ هُوَ فَوْقَاتَ...

...So a second-grader should not tell a first-grader, "You are no good," and likewise up to the tenth grade. Thus, do not dismiss anyone below you, because then you will be dismissed by someone above you...

And at the end the Imam adds,

...because that will break him, and one who breaks a believer should then mend him.

Narrations concerning the greater migration

27. There is a sermon by Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him) where he says,

...One might claim that he has migrated, but he has not migrated. The migrants are only those who have abandoned sins and do not commit them. One might claim that he has combated but he has not combated. Combat (jihad) is but to abstain from what is forbidden and to fight the enemy. There were indeed some people who fought and loved fighting, but they were only seeking fame and reward...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 68:232, reported from Thaqafī al-Kūfī, al-Ghārāt, 2:502-503.

28. This is a part of a narration by Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him):

O Mihzam, our follower (shī'ah) is one whose voice does not go past his [own] hearing, whose enmity does not go past his body, who does not praise us publicly, does not sit with anyone that maligns us, and does not argue with our enemies. When he

meets a believer, he honors him; and when he meets an imprudent person (jāhil), he parts from him...

Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 2:238, reported with a connected chain of transmission from Mihzam al-Asadī.

The meaning of jahl in the Quran and the hadith

[tr: The term jahl is often used to mean the lack of knowledge, as something that pertains to the mind. Thus, a jahil would be one who is ignorant, as opposed to one who is learned and knowledgeable. However, in the Quran and the narrations, jahl is usually an attribute of one's behavior and action. It is not the opposite of film (knowledge), but it is the opposite of hilm, hulum and agl (prudence, understanding and reason, again in the practical sense not the theoretical). Thus, a janil is one who is not disciplined in terms of his words, actions and interactions. It is one who is rash, unwise and intolerant. Likewise, jähiliyyah (the Age of Ignorance, the pre-Islamic era of the Arabian Peninsula) does not primarily refer to the lack of knowledge of the people living at that time and place, but it refers to the widespread imprudence and intolerance in their attitudes and customs. It is true that the people of that time and place were predominantly illiterate and uneducated—which took its toll on their lifestyle, culture and civilization—but the terms jahl, jähil and jāhiliyyah first and foremost concern the aspect of one's behavior. Similarly, when the Quran describes mankind as jahūl in the Verse of Trust (al-amānah, 33:72), it primarily means the lack of practical wisdom, not theoretical wisdom. A jahil or jahūl in this sense is a thoughtless person; it is one who decides and acts before considering and realizing the different aspects and consequences of the decision he is about to make. One may say that this sense of jahl is a matter of structure more than being a matter of content; it is not the lack of science or scholarship, but it is the lack of scientific and scholarly approach and behavior. This also clarifies the meaning of 'tiql' (intellect, reason) in many verses and narrations: It is not something purely mental or a matter of understanding concepts, but it is often something practical and behavioral. 'Aql in this sense (which is called al-agl al-amali, practical reason or intellect) is one's ability to have control and prudence over his conduct, actions, speeches, emotions, inclinations, desires and incoming thoughts. Hilm and Inlim are also used in this meaning (as in 24:58-59 and 52:32). Likewise, the Persian translation of jāhil would be nā-bikhrad or sabuk-sar, not nādān.

29. In this narration, Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him) is asked about faith. He replies:

سُنِلَ أَمِيرُ الْوُمِنِينَ (عليه السّلام) عَنِ الْإِيمَانِ. فَقَالَ: إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ جَعَلَ الْإِيمَانَ عَلَى أَرْبَعِ دَعَائِمَ: عَلَى الصَّبْرِ وَالْيَقِينِ وَالْعَدْلِ وَالْجِهَادِ...

Truly God, Mighty and Majestic He is, laid faith on four pillars: patience, certitude, justice and struggle...

Then he explains each of them in detail. There, concerning struggle he says:

...And there are four branches of struggle: commanding what is good, forbidding what is evil, loyalty in the fields [i.e. the inner and outer battlefields], and disliking the evil-doers...

Then he discusses each of these four branches. About disliking the evil-doers he says,

...Whoever dislikes the evil-doers has shown anger for God, and whoever shows anger for God, God will show anger for him [in his favor]...

He finishes the narration by saying,

...So that is faith with its pillars and branches.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:50-51, with a connected chain of transmission from Jābir, from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him).

- 30. Ibid., 2:289. Also see Majlisī, Bihār al-anwār, 69:105.
- 31. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:20-23, reported from Samā^cat ibn Mihrān, from Imām Şādiq (peace be upon him). This is a very long narration, where the Imām names seventy-five armies of 'aql and seventy-five armies of jahl one-by-one, matching each with its opposite. At the end, the Imām says:

... فَلَا تَجْتَمِعُ هَذِهِ الْخِصَالُ كُلُهَا مِنَ أَجْنَادِ الْمَقْلِ إِلَّا فِي نَتِي أَوْ وَصِيْ نَبِي أَوْ مُؤْمِنٍ قَدِ امْتَحَنَ اللهُ قَلْبَهُ لِلْإِيمَانِ، وَأَمَّا سَائِرُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ مَوَالِينَا فَإِنَّ أَحَدَهُمْ لَا يَخْلُومِنْ أَنْ يَكُونَ فِيهِ بَعْضُ هَذِهِ الْجُنُودِ حَتَّى يَنتَكُولَ وَ يَنْقَى مِنْ جُنُودِ الْجُهْلِ فَمِنْدَ ذَلِكَ يَكُونُ فِي الدَّرَجَةِ الْمُلْيَا مَعَ الأَنْبِيَاءِ وَ

الأَوْصِيَاءِ. وَإِنَّمَا يُدْرَكُ ذَلِكَ بِمَعْرِفَةِ الْعَقْلِ وَجُنُودِهِ وَبِمُجَانَبَةِ الْجَهْلِ وَجُنُودِهِ. وَقُقَنَا اللهُ وَ إِيَّاكُمْرُ لِطَاعَتِه وَمَرْضَاتِه.

...These attributes of the armies of 'aql cannot be found all together except in a prophet, a prophet's successor, or a believer whose heart God has purified for faith. As with others, one who is among our followers would not be devoid of these armies altogether—until he acquires them all and is cleared from the armies of jahl. It is then that he will reach the exalted rank of being with the prophets and the saints. That can only be achieved by realizing 'aql and its armies, and abstaining from jahl and its armies. May God assist us to do His worship and what He pleases.

Amen! Amen! Amen!

The narration on success and victory

32. *Ibid.*, 2:233, with a connected chain of transmission from Ibrāhīm ibn 'Umar al-Yamānī. The late Majlisī has reported this narration and explained success and victory as follows:

There are a few possible meanings here:

- 1. They have success and victory over the opponents [of their beliefs] through proof and reason.
- 2. They have victory over their outward enemies—if they are ordered to fight—because of their certitude and courage.
- They have victory over their inner enemies through their spiritual combat. That would be the defeat of the armies of jahl and Satan by the armies of faql (as mentioned in the Book of faql).
- 4. They have succeeded in having the gates of heavenly graces and divine effusions opened upon them, and are victorious in having reached their destination.

The first meaning denotes their perfection in terms of knowledge and reasoning, while the second meaning denotes their perfection in terms of action and practice. Thus, they have reached the utmost goal of their intellectual and practical powers, which is the opening of the gates of mysteries and the proximity of the Truth.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 65:186-187.

33. This has been attributed to Plato:

مُتْ عَنِ الطَّبِيعَةِ (بِالطَّبِيعَةِ) تَحْتِي بِالْحَقِيقَةِ.

If you put down corporeality, you will live by the reality.

[tr: See Nīsābūrī, Tafsīr gharā'īb al-Qur'ān, 1:314. Note that time has had its impact on what is attributed to Plato and other ancient thinkers. In the process of being translated and transmitted to Muslim philosophers and Sufis, the teachings of Plato, Aristotle and the Neoplatonists were sometimes mixed together, and they eventually blended with the Islamic tradition. Nonetheless, the above quote is reminiscent of the Phaedo, as a summary, paraphrase or interpretation. It is also reminiscent of the following words of Paul: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Romans 8:13).]

The four realms that a traveler toward God should traverse

- 34. There are four realms between a human being and God, which a way-farer should traverse:
 - The realm of nature (thb), which is also called the realm of the soul (nafs), the sensible world (hiss), the visible world (shahādah), the realm of matter (mādah), the corporeal world (mulk), and the realm of humanity (nāsūt).
 - The realm of forms (mithal), which is also called the intermediate realm (barzakh), the imaginal world (khayal), the realm of the heart (qalb), and the realm of the angels (malaktit).
 - 3. The realm of intellects (sing. 'aql), which is also called the realm of the spirit (rāḥ), the realm of immateriality and detachment from both matter and form (tajarrud), and the realm of invincibility (jabarāt). [tr: It is called invincibility because it has dominance and authority over the two realms of nature and forms.]
 - 4. The realm of the Lord (al-ʿalam al-rubūbī), which is also called the realm of Divinity (lālīt), the realm of the Beloved, and the Spirit of spirits (Persian jānān and jān-i jān).

The lesser resurrection (al-qiyāmah al-ṣughrá) is when one passes the realm of nature through either voluntary death, which is the death of the evil-commanding soul, or involuntary death, which is natural death. Therefore the lesser resurrection is to struggle with the evil-commanding soul and to combat in this battlefield, until one completes this resurrection and goes beyond it. Then he will find himself in the realm of forms, where he would again have to struggle in order to pass beyond it. That would be one's intermediate resurrection (al-qiyāmah al-wusfa), which takes place in the world of forms and angels. One com-

pletes the intermediate resurrection by leaving the realm of forms behind and entering the realm of intellects and invincibility. Then the person would again have to struggle in order to go beyond the realm of intellects and invincibility, and that would be his greater spiritual resurrection (al-qiyāmah al-kubrá al-anfusiyyah). Thus, the greater resurrection occurs in the realm of intellects and invincibility, and one completes this resurrection by going beyond this realm and into the realm of Divinity.

- 35. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 67:64, reported from Ibn Fahd al-Ḥillī, Uddat al-dā 7, p. 314.
- 36. The author has apparently mentioned this conversation of God with the spirit as a narration from one of the Infallibles, and some have explicitly confirmed it. However, I did not find it in the books of hadith, but a similar account of this conversation and censure has been narrated from Plato.

[tr: Apparently this is among the accounts and statements attributed to Plato only in the Islamic mystical texts, but perhaps not truly by him.]

- 37. See Muslim, Ṣaḥūḥ Muslim, 1:112.
- 38. See Ghazzālī, Iļnyā' 'ulūm al-dīn, 1:57; Fayd al-Kāshānī, al-Maļajjah al-baydā', 1:85.
- 39. [tr: This is not a narration, but it is the word of the sages. See Şadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, *Mafātiḥal-ghayb*, p. 174.]

Abraham's Supplication against Idolatry

- 40. There is no reason to limit Abraham's prayer to the idol of self and ego. There are a few reasons for this:
 - If we take into account that the Quran has many levels and hidden layers, then the verse would include every type of idolatry, be that the worship of physically manufactured idols, or the worship of the evil-commanding soul, the jinn, the angels, Satan or other human beings. In fact, the apparent meaning of the verse would only concern the physically manufactured idols, based on the following verse where Abraham justifies his request by saying,

My Lord, they have indeed led astray many of the people... (14:36)

At that time when Abraham rose against idolatry, people used to worship physical idols, and Abraham's overriding concern was to save the people form this misguidance.

It is commendable for everyone—including the prophets—to make supplication for everything and every situation, whether it concerns the worship of physical idols or the evil-commanding soul. The fact of the matter is that at the end of the day, the only saver and rescuer is God, regardless of whether one is a beginner or someone who has attained many stations and perfections. [tr: See the translator's note on inherent deficiency under note 42 on Chapter 4.]

- 3. Just as one cannot conceive of Abraham and the prophets to worship physical manufactured idols, so is the case with their inward worship of the self and ego.
- 41. See Şadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, Tafsīr al-Qur an al-karīm, 5:251.

The story of Junayd and the singing bondmaid

42. This poem was narrated by a bondmaid in the time of Junayd:

Junayd's words concerning mysticism and the spiritual path are well-known and reported in the books in this field. The following account is one of them. He said:

I did not benefit from anything as I benefited from these lines that a bondmaid was singing to herself in a house:

تَقُولِينَ لَوْ لَا الْحِجْرُ لَمْ يَطِبِ الْحُبُ	إِذَا قُلْتُ أَهْدَى الْمِجْرُ لِي حُلَلَ البِّلَي
تَقُولِي بَيْرِانِ الْهَوَى شَرَفَ الْقَلْبُ	وَ إِنْ قُلْتُ هَذَا القَلْبُ أَخْرَقَهُ الْحَوَى
وُجُودُكَ ذَنْبُ لَا يُقَاسُ بِهِ ذَنْبُ	إِذَا قُلْتُ مَا أَذْنَبْتُ قَالَتْ مُجِيبَةً

I said: A ragged garb of grief, Separation has made me wear.

She said: A love without it, Would be foul and not fair.

I said: My heart is burning In a passion that I can't bear.

She said: The heart's honor Is this fire and its flare.

I said: I have no sin; She said with a cold stare:

Your existence is a sin To which no sin you can compare.

Hearing these lines made me shriek and faint. The owner of the house came to me and asked me what was wrong? I told him

NOTES ON CHAPTER FOUR

that it was due to the poems of that bondmaid. Thus the owner gave her to me, and I set her free.

Mudarris, Rayhānat al-adab, 1:433, the section on Junayd.

The inherent deficiency of every human being

[tr: "Your existence is a sin to which no sin can be compared" is a very famous and widely quoted statement in the Sufi literature. Here is one meaning and interpretation for it: The statement is not an exaggeration or a purely delicate figure of speech. Rather, it signifies a reality. It is about how one finds oneself: as an independent entity that has some share of existence, life, power and freedom; or as a reflection and manifestation of another Reality to whom belongs everything that the person apparently has? In other words, every human being—or rather every contingent being—has two aspects:

One: an existential aspect, which belongs to God:

...وَنَفَخُتْ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي...

... I have breathed of My Spirit into him... (15:29, 38:72)

Two: an aspect of limitation, determination and deficiency, which composes the shape, appearance and quiddity (*māhiyyah*) of that person or thing.

The underlying basis of every error in knowledge, intention, speech or action is this aspect of limitation and deficiency. If it were not for that aspect, there would not be any sin, as nothing would deviate from pure Existence (i.e. pure reality). What distinguishes between my existence, your existence and so-and-so's existence is not existence itself, for that is their common denominator. It must be their non-existential aspects, or their elements of deficiency, limitation and imperfection, that set things apart from one another. Hence, what one has for and of oneself is nothing but imperfection and deficiency. All good is from the Source of Good, and all evil is from these elements of limitation:

Whatever of good befalleth thee, it is from God; and whatever of evil befalleth thee, it is from thyself... (4:79)

This dichotomy might be what the doctors of spiritual journeying—such as Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī and his line of students—saw in the Yūnusian Invocation (al-dhikr al-Yūnusiyyah Jonah's invocation), which they used to highly emphasize and recommend to their pupils as an extremely powerful and effective invocation:

...O, there is no god but Thee; glory be to Thee; truly I have been among the wrongdoers. (21:87)

This also explains the supplications of the Infallibles where they confess to being sinful, and plead to God for forgiveness. These supplications are more sincere and wholehearted to be a mere show for teaching others how to supplicate. The prophets and Imāms were truly filled with an intense fear of God. They were not lying when they would say, "I have sinned," but that was when they would look at their own self, regardless of its aspect of connection with God. They had the utmost degree of infallibility, such that they would not even think about the most minor sin, but all of that was due to their first aspect and not due to themselves, for one's self is nothing but imperfection and deficiency. This is clearly seen in the following sermon by Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him):

...فَإِنِّى لَسْتُ فِي نَفْسِي بِفَوْقِ أَنْ أَخْطِئَ وَلَا آمَنُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ فِعْلِي إِلَّا أَنْ يَصُفِي اللهُ مِنْ نَفْسِي مَا هُوَ أَمْلَكُ بِهِ مِنِّي، فَإِنَّمَا أَنَا وَأَنْتُمْ عَبِيدٌ مُمْلُوكُونَ لِرَبِّ لَا رَبَّ غَيْرُهُ، يَمْلِكُ مِنَا مَا لَا تَمْلِكُ مِنْ أَنْفُسِنَا، وَأَخْرَجَنَا مِمَّاكُنَا فِيهِ إِلَى مَاصَلَحْنَا عَلَيْهِ، فَأَبْدَلْنَا بَعْدَ الضَّلَالَةِ بِالْمُدَى، وَأَعْطَانَا الْبَصِيرَةَ بَعْدَ الْعَمَى.

Truly I am not superior to error by myself, and am not confident of my actions to be flawless, except if God averts from me that on which He has a greater possession than myself. For indeed I and you are merely servants owned by a Lord beside Whom there is no lord. He possesses of us that which we do not possess of ourselves. He brought us forth from that in which we were, to that which sets us right. Thus, He exchanged our misguidance for guidance, and gave us insight after blindness.

Nahj al-balāghah, Sermon 216. These words of the Imām are an exposition of the following humble statement of Prophet Joseph:

I do not exonerate my soul. Truly the [human] soul ever commandeth unto evil, save that whereon my Lord hath mercy... (12:53)

These infallible individuals knew themselves and their reality more than anyone else, and thus they had realized more than anyone else that without the grace of God they are only in loss and error. These were (and are) the pillars of tawhīd and accepting their guardianship (wilāyah) is to be led by them to this realization. "Such splendid masters and excellent helpers" (ni 'm al-mawlá wa ni 'm al-naṣīr).

Note: Since verse 4:79 was quoted above, a clarification needs to be made: The verse does not contradict its previous verse, where God says:

...If a good thing befalleth them [the hypocrites], they say, "This is from God"; but if an evil thing befalleth them, they say, "This is of thee [O Muḥammad]." Say: "All is from God."... (4:78)

"All is from God" is an expression of God's unity (tawhīd), as an answer to the hypocrites who set the Prophet at the same level as God. It is about the existential aspects of any event, whether pleasant or unpleasant (i.e. evil) to the people. However, verse 4:79 says that what makes something evil is not its existential aspect, which is from God, but is the receiver's deficiency and limitation to absorb the good and the blessings that emanate from the Source of Good.

Another note to be made is concerning the Christian concept of the original sin, and the belief that every human being is innately sinful. This concept and belief can have a plausible meaning if it is interpreted as the the aspect of deficiency and limitation that is inherent in every human being. In general, there are many religious beliefs and practices that originally pertain to a deep level of reality and gnosis, but then they are rendered irrational or superstitious by the common people who do not have that capacity to comprehend those deep and subtle realities.

We should excuse, O my brother, The seventy-two nations that oppose one another.

Here is the cause of how they interact: They fell into fiction for they didn't see the fact.

Hafiz, ghazal 184.]

43. The author has interpreted the part of the verse where God commands Abraham, "Submit!" as the greatest submission, and the part where Abraham accepts it by saying, "I have submitted to the Lord of all be-

ings" as a higher stage, which would be the greatest faith. He might have inferred this from the term, "the Lord of all beings" (Rabb al-Talantin), meaning that he submitted after realizing his nonexistence due to seeing the signs of God's magnificence in all beings. "The Lord of all beings" refers to God's fostering of every being. Thus, Abraham observed his nonexistence vis-à-vis the Lord of all beings, and this vision and acceptance is the greatest faith.

- 44. The poem is by Ḥallāj and is mentioned in Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, Asfār, 1:116.
- 45. The following three accounts have been narrated from Bayazīd Basṭāmī:

When I got to the station of proximity (qurb), I was told, "Make a request!" I said, "I do not have any request. Thou [my Beloved] make a request on my behalf." I was told [again], "Make a request!" I said, "I only want Thee..." I was told,

دَغ نَفْسَكَ وَتَعَالَ.

As long as there is an atom of Bāyazīd's existence, this request is impossible! Leave thy self and come.

'Attar, Tadhkirat al-awliya', p. 161.

Once I made a supplication to Him and said,

كَيْفَ الوُصُولُ إِلَيْكَ؟

How can I reach Thee?

Then I heard a voice saying,

طَلِقْ نَفْسَكَ ثَلَاثًا ثُمَّ قُلِ اللهُ.

O Bāyazīd, divorce your nafs (self, ego) thrice, then say God.

That is, first divorce your self three times and then talk about us!

Ibid., p. 161.

I saw the Mighty Lord in a dream. I told Him, "O my Lord, how can I find Thee?" He said, "Depart from your self and come to Me."

Shacrānī, al- Tabaqāt al-kubrá, 1:77.

The greatest migration and the greatest struggle

46. One could also say that "O soul at peace" (89:27) addresses a soul that has gone as far as the greatest faith. That is, it has completed the greater struggle, reached the realm of success and victory, submitted itself by the greatest submission, and has also reached the stage of the greatest faith by observing, realizing and accepting its nonexistence vis-à-vis the existence of the Divine Essence. That would be the place of peace and composure. Then it is addressed, "Return unto thy Lord" (89:28), ordering it to migrate from its existence to that of God (its Lord). This is a more appropriate interpretation because the term "return" is more relevant to migration.

That would be the greatest migration, where a wayfarer bids farewell to the realm of the nafs (self, ego) and settles in the realm of the Truth (al-Ḥaqq). Such a wayfarer would certainly be pleased with God's decrees—including His cosmological and legislative decrees (takwīmī and tashrīT), meaning that he would not commit any sin or do anything against the will of God. Of course, God would also be satisfied and pleased with such a servant, because he has precisely followed the path of His servitude. Hence such a servant has the two attributes of being well-pleased and well-pleasing.

However, there are still some properties and traces of his existence that remain. Therefore, he has to take on the greatest struggle in order to eliminate the remaining hidden traces of his existence. That is where true essential servitude would be realized for him. "Enter thou among My servants" (89:29) refers to the stage of the greatest struggle, which is the ultimate degree of servitude. Then the last stage would be to eradicate even this attribute of servitude, for it implies some sense of duality and distinction [from his Lord]. This can be attained by absolute annihilation in God's Essence, which would be the realm of Divinity ($la\bar{n}\bar{u}$) or the realm of the most sincere (mukhlasin). That is called the Paradise of Essence ($jannat\ al-dh\bar{a}t$) and has been referred to in the last verse: "Enter thou My Paradise" (89:30).

Thus, entering the Paradise of Essence means the completion of the twelve-realm journey, which was a journey toward God (sayr ill Allah).

In the whole Noble Quran, it is only in this case that God has ascribed paradise to Himself by saying, "My Paradise." This Paradise of Essence is the highest and most superior of the eight paradises.

47. What is meant here is that a wayfarer in the realm of the greatest faith—which is a seating and abode of truth (sidq)—has yet to perform the greatest struggle and thus completely eliminate the signs and properties of his existence. Therefore he is still under the shade of the two great Names of malik (Sultan, King) and muqtadir (Omnipotent).

In other words, he finds himself under the authority and dominance of a Powerful King. Thus, he has to struggle, while appealing to this Powerful King, in order to leave any remaining traces of his existence once and for all. By doing so, the person will no longer be under the shade of these two Names, and will instead subscribe to the Name, "They are living, and receive sustenance there with their Lord" (3:169).

48. I, the nondescript being, could not verify this as a narration despite my extensive search. Perhaps the author did not cite it as a narration, but as a saying of certain mystics or sages—although that is against his style of writing, for he has used this way of citation for the words of the Prophet or the Infallible Imams.

Mullā Şadrā has reported a narration along these lines from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him):

Whoever wants to look at a dead man walking shall look at me.

Tafsīr al-Qur ān al-karīm, 6:117, under verse 32:21.

[tr: A very similar narration has been widely reported by many Sunni authorities about Ṭalḥah: "Whoever wants to look at a martyr walking on the face of earth shall look at Ṭalḥah ibn ʿUbayd-Allāh." See al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, Kanz al-ʿummāl, 11:696; Tirmidhī, Sunan al-Tirmidhī, 5:307-308. Another one—though reported by much fewer sources—has been narrated about Abū Bakr. See Shaʿrānī, Lawāqiḥ al-anwār al-qudsiyyah, p. 555. Of course, an informed reader would be very cautious in accepting these narrations, as many such narrations were forged due to political reasons to discredit the unique status and merits of Imām ʿAlī by attributing the same merits to the other Companions of the Prophet.]

Notes on Chapter Five

Narrations concerning the petition of Prophet Idris and his people

1. It has been narrated from Wahab ibn Munabbih:

Idrīs (Enoch) was indeed a tall man... He was named Idrīs because he used to teach many lessons (sing. dars) when he was among his people on the traditions and customs of Islam (submission) and the wisdoms of God, Mighty and Majestic He is. He pondered upon the magnificence of God, Majestic is His Majesty, and said, "There must be a Lord for these heavens, these earths [or lands], this great creation, the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, the rain and everything there is. They must have a Lord that directs them and keeps them in check and well-being by His Power. How can I know this Lord so that I may worship Him as He deserves?"

Thus, he met with a group of his people in private and started admonishing them, reminding them, giving them warning, and calling them to worship the Creator of all things. They started accepting his call one after another, until there were seven of them. Then they kept increasing in number until they reached seventy, then seven hundred, and then over one thousand. He told them, "Let us choose a hundred of our righteous ones," which they did. Then they chose seventy out of those one hundred, and then ten out of the seventy, and then seven out of the ten. He told them, "Let us have these seven people supplicate and the rest of us say amen, haply our Lord-Majestic is His Majesty-may guide us to His worship [i.e. teach us how to worship Him]." Thus, they placed their hands on the ground and made a long supplication. But nothing appeared to them and no clarification came unto them. Then they raised their hands toward the heavens [in supplication]. Thereupon, God-Mighty and Majestic is He-sent a revelation to Idrīs (peace be upon him) informing them of His worship and guiding them to it. Hence, they started worshipping Him without associating any partners with Him. When God, Mighty and Majestic is He, raised Idris to the heavens, the followers of his religion became almost extinct. Those who came after started deviating, introducing new things and making innovations in the religion, until the time of Noah (peace be upon him).

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 11:270-271, quoted from Ṣadūq, 'Ilal al-sharā'; 1:27-28, reported with its chain of transmission.

2. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:44-45. This is the narration by 'Abd al-'Azīz that was mentioned before (p. 45).

Narrations about the concomitance of knowledge and practice

3. *Ibid.*, 1:44, reported from Ḥasan ibn al-Ṣayqal, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). The narration as reported by Majlisī is:

God, Mighty and Majestic is He, accepts no action unless it is accompanied by knowledge, and no knowledge unless it is accompanied by action. So one who knows, his knowledge shall guide him to practice, and if he does not practice then he has no knowledge. Truly some parts of faith are a result of other parts.

Biliār al-anwār, 1:206-207, quoted with its chain of transmission from Ṣadūq, al-Amālī, pp. 507-508 and Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:198.

4. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:44, reported from Ismā'īl ibn Jābir. The narration as reported by Majlisī is:

Knowledge is tied to practice. Thus, whoever knows, practices; and whoever practices, knows. Knowledge calls for practice; if the person responds positively [then the knowledge stays]; otherwise it leaves.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 2:40, quoted from al-Shahīd al-Thānī, Munyat al-murīd, p. 181. The last part of this narration is Saying 366 of Nahj al-balāghah, quoted in Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 2:36.

5. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 66:22, quoted from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:38, reported with a connected chain of transmission from Muḥammad ibn Muslim. The full narration is:

سَأَلْتُهُ عَنِ الْإِيَّانِ. فَقَالَ: شَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّداً رَسُولُ اللهِ وَ الْإِفْرَارُ بِمَا جَاءَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللهِ وَمَا اسْتَقَرَّ فِي الْقُلُوبِ مِنَ التَّصْدِيقِ بِذَلِكَ. قَالَ قُلْتُ: الشَّهَادَةُ أَلَيْسَتْ عَمَلاً؟ قَالَ: بَلَى.

قُلْتُ: الْتَمَلُ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمُ، الْإِيمَانُ لَا يَصُونُ إِلَّا بِعَمَلِ وَالْتَمَلُ مِنْهُ وَلَا يَتُبُتُ الْإِيمَانُ إِلَّا بِمَعَلِ.

I asked him [Imām Ṣādiq] about faith. He replied, "It consists of the following: 1. to testify that there is no god but God [and that Muḥammad is His Messenger]; 2. to accept what has come from God; and 3. that which is established in the heart as a result of this confirmation." I said, "Is not the testimony an action?" He replied, "Yes." I asked, "Is action a part of faith?" He said, "Yes. Faith cannot be without action: action is a part of it, and faith does not stabilize save by some action."

6. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 66:23, quoted from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:38, reported from Jamīl ibn Darrāj. The full narration is:

I asked Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) about faith. He replied, "It is to testify that there is no god but God, and that Muḥammad is His Messenger." I said, "Is this not an action?" He replied, "Yes." I asked, "So is action a part of faith?" He said, "Yes. Faith does not stabilize for someone except by action; action is a part of it."

There are many other narrations like this. For example, Muḥammad ibn Muslim has narrated from either Imām Bāqir or Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon them):

الْإِيمَانُ إِقْرَارُوعَمَلُ...

Faith is to confess and act...

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:24. In another narration, Sallām al-Ju^cfī asked Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) about faith. He replied,

الْإِيمَانُ أَنْ يُطَاعَ اللهُ فَلَا يُعْصَى.

Faith is to obey God and not to disobey Him.

Ibid. 2:33.

7. See *Nahj al-balāghah*, Sermons 156, 176, 189, and Sayings 31, 82, 113, 146, 227, 458.

- 8. See p. 43.
- 9. This account has been narrated about Bāyazīd Basṭāmī:

He was told that there is a great master somewhere far away. Thus Bāyazīd set out on a long journey to see him. When he got there, he saw the master spitting toward the *qiblah* (direction of prayer). Bāyazīd returned at once, saying, "Was he of any station in the *tarīqah* (the esoteric path), he would not have deviated from the shariah (the exoteric path)."

'Attar, Tadhkirat al-awliya', 139-140.

Excessive cautiousness does not agree with the spirit of religion

10. Similar acts of caution and consideration have been narrated from many great figures of wayfaring, mysticism and piety. However, it is important to keep in mind that these precautions applied to them [specifically] due to a particular spiritual state that they had at the time or most of the time. Otherwise, Islam in general does not lend itself to such constrictions and hardships. Instead, the basis of the sacred shariah is total attention to God and intense observation of ethics and self-purification.

In terms of outward actions, Islam is based on certain principles such as the principle of purity (aṣāat al-ṭahārah) and the principle of lawfulness (aṣāat al-ṭailiyyah). [tr: In short, these two principles state that things are by default pure and/or lawful, unless proven otherwise.] Too much and excessive caution prevents a wayfarer from paying attention to God and focusing on his journey toward the realm of unconditionality and immateriality. Being too meticulous and fastidious with things beyond the disposition of the shariah makes one enchained in his illusions and obsessions. Such precautions and precisions keep one's mind and thought constantly engaged with these matters, and thus close the way of God to him by depriving him of having attention, contemplation and concentration—which are the central means of spiritual journeying.

- 11. This is not a narration, although it is true and correct. [tr: That is, it is an accepted doctrine among most Muslim scholars, and of course it concerns optional deeds and moral traits, not obligatory acts or beliefs. It is apparently a statement by Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz, although it is commonly quoted as a tradition. See Āyatullāh Marʿashī Najafī's annotation on Shūshtarī, Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq wa izhāq al-bāṭil, 1:335; Ṭurayḥī, Majmaʿal-baḥrayn, 1:55; lbn Kathīr, al-Bidāyah wa al-nihāyah, 11:58.]
- 12. See note 22 on Chapter 4.
- 13. Intellect here does not mean the realm of the immaterial intellects, which would be the realm of the spirit or invincibility. This is because one reaches the realm of the immaterial intellects *after* the greater strug-

- gle, not before it. What is meant here is that the person should abandon everything other than God.
- 14. Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:25, with a connected chain of transmission, through Ismāʿīl ibn Mihrān, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

Imam Kazim's narration concerning the intellect

15. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:16. This is part of a lengthy advice about the intellect that Imām Kāzim gave Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam. Kulaynī has reported it in al-Kāfī, 1:13ff, from Abū 'Abd-Allāh al-Ash'arī, up to Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam with an unmentioned chain of transition (marfū'). It is also reported in Ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī, Tuḥaf al- ʿuqūl, p. 383ff, quoted by Majlisī in Biḥār al-anwār, 1:132ff. The narration begins as follows:

O Hishām, truly God, Exalted and Blessed is He, has given glad tidings in His Book to the people of intellect and discernment: "So give good tidings to my servants Who listen to the speech and follow the best thereof; such are those whom God hath guided, and such are those possessed of minds" (39:17-18)...

Narrations on the noble moral traits

16. This narration is reported with the same wording as the text or with slight variations in the following sources: 1. Al-Mu ʃam al-mufahras li-alfāz al-ḥadīth al-nabawī, under kh-l-q and b- th, quoted from Mālik ibn Anas, al-Muwaṭṭa², 2:904. 2. Ghazzālī, Iṭŋā² ulūm al-dīn, 5:141, 7:98 and 8:90, quoted from Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 2:381, Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, al-Mustadrak ald al-ṣaḥīṭayn, 2:613, and Bayhaqī, al-Sunan al-kubrá 10:192. 3. Suyūṭī, al-Jāni al-ṣaḍnīt, 1:155, quoted from Ḥākim and Bayhaqī.

However, I did not find it with this wording in the original Shia sources of tradition, except for Tabrisī, Makārim al-akhlāq, p. 8, with an incomplete chain of transmission (mursal).

Other than that, the late Majlisī has quoted this narration in explaining the verse,

Truly thou [O Muḥammad] art of a magnificent character. (68:4)

He says, "His khulq (character, conduct) was magnificent because it comprised every noble moral trait. This has been confirmed by the following Prophetic narrations:

I have only been sent to complete the noble moral traits.

My Lord disciplined me—and how excellent He disciplined me."

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 16:210. Also see Qummī, Safīnat al-biḥār, 1:410. Furthermore, Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon him) said,

I heard the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) saying, "I have been sent with the best and noblest moral traits."

Tūsī, al-Amālī, p. 595-596, reported with a connected chain of transmission from Imām Kāzim, from his fathers up to Imām 'Alī (peace be upon them); quoted by Majlisī in Biḥār al-anwār, 16:287.

The following narrations have also been reported in this regard. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) said:

Hold fast to the noble moral traits, for truly God, Mighty and Majestic is He, sent me with them. Indeed, of these noble moral traits is that a person forgives one who wrongs him, gives to one who deprives him, connects with one who disconnects from him, and visits one who does not visit him.

Tūsī, al-Amālī, p. 478, with a connected chain of transmission from Imām Riḍā, from his fathers up to the Messenger of God (peace be upon them); quoted by Majlisī in Biḥār al-anwār, 66:375.

Imām Şādiq (peace be upon him) said:

إِنَّ اللهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى خَصَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ (صلَّى الله عليه وآله وسلَّم) بِمَّكَارِمِ الأَخْلَاقِ فَامْتَخِنُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَإِنْ كَانَتْ فِيكُمْ فَاحْمَدُوا اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَ ارْغَبُوا إِلَيْهِ فِي الزِّيَادَةِ مِنْهَا. فَذَكَرَهَا عَشَرَةً: اليُقِينَ وَالْقَنَاعَةَ وَالصَّبْرَوَ الشُّكْرَوَ الزِضَاقِ حُسْنَ الْخُلُقِ وَالشَّخَاءَ وَالْفَيْرَةَ وَالشَّجَاعَةَ وَالْمُرُوءَ ةَ.

"Truly God, Exalted and Blessed is He, favored the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) with the noble moral traits. So examine yourselves: If you find them in yourselves then praise God, the Mighty and Majestic, and eagerly ask Him to increase them in you." Then the Imām named these ten qualities: certitude ($yaq\bar{\imath}n$), contentment ($qan\bar{a}^{\epsilon}ah$), patience (sabr), gratitude (shukr), satisfaction ($rid\bar{a}$), good conduct ($husn\ al-khulq$), protectiveness (ghayrah), generosity ($sakh\bar{a}^{\epsilon}$), courage ($shaj\bar{a}^{\epsilon}ah$) and manhood ($mur\bar{u}^{\epsilon}ah$).

Ṣadūq, Ma ānī al-akhbār, pp. 191-192, with a connected chain of transmission. A very similar narration has been cited in Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:56, where these traits are mentioned as the qualities of all messengers.

The meaning of murū'ah

[tr: 1. See note 52 on Chapter 6 for the meaning of ghayrah. 2. $Mur\bar{u}^2ah$ (or muruwuah) is from the root mar^2 , meaning man (not as opposed to woman, but as a person of noble human traits). Based on the narrations, $mur\bar{u}^2ah$ means the quality of honorably keeping one's self away from all baseness. Nobility of the soul, having a free spirit, benevolence, forgiveness, self-sacrifice and courage are often associated with this quality. The root mar^2 can be matched with vir in Latin, meaning "man" and having derivates like virtue. Likewise, $mur\bar{u}^2ah$ can be translated as virility. The same is true in Persian, where hunar (virtue) consists of $h\bar{u}$ (excellence) and nar (man). This is often the intended connotation in the usages of "man" (mar^2 or rajul) in Arabic, including the Quran and the Islamic tradition. It is pivotal that we do not commit anachronism by applying the gender-related concerns and criteria of modernity to texts written in a traditional context.]

Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) also said,

إِنَّالَغِبُ مَنَ كَانَ عَاقِلاً فَهِما فَقِيها حَلِيمًا مُدَارِياً صَبُوراً صَدُوقاً وَفِيَاً. إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّوَ جَلَّ خَصَّ الأَنْبِيَاءَ بِمُكَارِمِ الأَخْلَاقِ فَمَزَكَانَتْ فِيهِ فَلْيَحْمَدِ اللهَ عَلَى ذَلِتَ وَمَنْ لَمَرْ تَكُنْ فِيهِ فَلْيَتَضَرَّعُ إِلَى اللهِ عَزَّق جَلَّ وَلُيسَأَلَهُ إِيَّاهَا. We surely love a person who is reasonable, discerning, learned, tolerant, lenient, patient, truthful and trustworthy. Truly God, Mighty and Majestic is He, favored his messengers with the noble moral traits. Whoever finds them in himself should praise God for them, and whoever does not find them in himself should plead to God, the Mighty and Majestic, and request them from Him.

The narrator asked the Imām, "May I be sacrificed for you; what are they?" The Imām replied:

They are abstinence from sin (wara), contentment ($qan\bar{a}$ ah), patience (sabr), gratitude (shukr), tolerance (hilm), shame ($hay\bar{a}$), generosity ($sakh\bar{a}$), courage ($shaj\bar{a}$ ah), protectiveness (ghayrah), benevolence (birr), honesty in speech (sidq al-haith) and fulfilling trusts ($ad\bar{a}$ al- $am\bar{a}nah$).

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:56, with a connected chain of transmission.

The necessity to follow a spiritual master

17. The religion (shar '), the intellect ('fiq1') and the human nature (fiṭrah') all concur that an ignorant person must refer to an expert for his needs. This is something inherent, the people of intellect agree on it, and it is also deducible from the verse:

...Ask the people of remembrance, if you know not. (16:43 and 21:7)

A yet more explicit verse concerning instruction and guidance to the straight path is a verse that quotes Abraham's (peace be upon him) speech to Āzar:

O my father, there hath indeed come to me some knowledge that hath not as come to thee. So follow me, so that I guide thee on a right path. (19:43) He explicitly argues that since I have been given some knowledge that you do not have, you should follow me so that I may guide you to a level path.

[tr: Reason ('aql) and human nature (fitrah) fall under religion (shar') and within its domain. They should not be mentioned as parallel to religion because they are not separate or independent from it. In cases where religion (shar') is contrasted with reason or intellect ('aql), what is really meant by religion is narrations, or the transmitted elements of religion (naql). However, equating shar' with naql is not accurate, because shar' consists of naql in addition to 'aql.]

At the same time, it is important not to mistake the scholars of the exoteric laws of religion (the ulama) for the experts of spirituality and wayfaring. The people of remembrance in spirituality are those who have mastered genuinely divine teachings and have encompassed the knowledge of what is essential and what is fatal for the soul If one wants to traverse the path of God and remove the veils [between him and God], he should refer to an expert in this subject, which is called "one who has a knowledge of God" (al-ʿālim bi-Allāt). There are numerous narrations concerning this, and the scholars of ethics and mysticism have also mentioned many precious points in this regard.

Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon him) has referred to such a master as a saintly scholar (al-ʿālim al-rabbānī) and a proof of God (ḥujjat Allān). He also explains that if one wants to be a student on the path of deliverance, he must follow such a scholar. This is a part of his advice to Kumayl, where he says,

...اللهُمَّ بَلَى لَا تَخْلُو الأَرْضُ مِنْ قَانِمٍ لِلَهِ بِحُجُّةٍ، إِمَّا ظَاهِراً مَشْهُوراً وَإِمَّا خَانِفاً مَعْمُوراً، لِتَلَّا تَبْطُلَ حُجِّجُ اللهِ وَبَيْنَاتُهُ. وَكَرْ ذَا وَأَيْنَ أُولَيْكَ؟ أُولَيْكَ وَاللهِ الْأَقْلُونَ عَدَداً وَ الأَعْظَمُونَ (عِنْدَ اللهِ) قَدْراً، يَحَقَظُ اللهُ بِهِمْ حُجِّهُ وَيَيْنَاتِهِ حَتَّى يُودِعُوهَا نُظَرَاءَهُمْ وَيَزْرَعُوهَا فِي قُلُوبٍ أَشْبَاهِهِمْ.

...But of course, the earth will never be empty of one who establishes the proofs (sing. [nijjah]) of God, [or it will never be empty of one who stands as a proof of God], so that the evident signs and proofs of God are not abolished. They are either apparent and known, or fearful and covered. How many are they, and where are they? By God, they are very few in number, but very high in rank [with God]. God protects His evident signs and proofs through them, until they entrust them to their equivalents and plant them in the hearts of their likes.

هِجَمَ بِهِمُ الْمِلْمُ عَلَى حَقِيقَةِ الْبَصِيرَةِ، وَ بَاشَرُوا رَوْحَ (رُوحَ) الْيَقِينِ، وَ اسْتَلَانُوا مَا اسْتَوْعَرَهُ الْمُتَرَنُّونَ، وَ أَنِسُوا بِمَا اسْتَوْحَشَ مِنْهُ الْجَاهِلُونَ، وَ صَحِبُوا الدُّنْيَا بِأَبْدَانٍ أَرْوَاحُهَا مُعَلَّقَةً بِالْمَحَـلِ الْأَعْلَى.

Knowledge has rushed them toward true insight, and they have embraced the breeze [or the spirit] of certitude. They have found easy what extravagant individuals find difficult, and have become intimate with what ignorant people find frightening. Their bodies are in this world while their spirits cling to the Supreme Realm.

They are indeed the vicegerents of God on His earth, and they are those who call to His religion. Ah! Ah! How I yearn to meet them!

You can go back whenever you want [O Kumayl].

Nahj al-balāghah, Saying 147. In this narration, the proofs that are either known or concealed include all saints and friends of God ($awliy\bar{a}$). They are the signs and proofs of God that are responsible for the education and discipline of the people. They guide the people toward the One Lord, Majestic and Mighty He is.

The above narration is not about the Infallible Imams in particular (peace be upon them). That is because first of all, the Imam classifies all mankind into three groups: saintly scholars, students on the path of deliverance, and worthless flies [or abject fools, i.e. those who are neither wise nor seeking wisdom, but rather follow any call and incline with every wind]. Clearly, the term "saintly scholar" has a general meaning and is not specific to the Imams—although they are the noblest and the most superior of the saintly scholars. Then the Imam speaks of the proofs of God, which fall under the category of saintly scholars. There is no indication that would limit these descriptions to the Infallibles. Hence, the comprehensiveness (itlaq) of the narration means that anyone who possesses these traits and qualities can be a guide for wayfarers on the path of God. He can be a teacher of the divine secrets to those who have a thirst for gnosis—those passionate souls that are burning for the vision of God and the Essence of the One. This is essentially the spiritual path (tar iqah) of the great sign of God, the late Akhund Mulla Husayn-Qulī Hamadānī, and his students in mysticism, each of which was a shining star in the sky of divine gnosis and unity.

The second reason why the above narration does not concern the Imāms in particular is that it says, "God protects His clear signs and proofs through them, until they entrust these divine secrets to their equivalents and plant them in the hearts of their likes." But no one is like or equivalent to an Imām, because an Imām is above and superior to everyone. Therefore, the "proofs that are either apparent and known, or fearful and unknown" are the saints and friends of God who have reached the station of the *mukhlaṣīn* (the chosen servants of God). It is for them that one can conceive likes, peers and equivalents.

[tr: The second argument does not necessarily lead to this conclusion, because it is possible for one Imām to entrust divine secrets and gnosis to another Imām. That is, interpreting "saintly scholars" as Imāms in particular does not necessitate a non-Imām being equivalent to an Imām.]

There is also a narration by Imām Sajjād (peace be upon him) that establishes a wayfarer's need to follow a knowledgeable and insightful guide on the path of gnosis:

One who does not have a wise sage guiding him is perished.

Irbilī, Kashf al-ghunmah, 2:325. Likewise is a sermon delivered by Imām Ḥusayn in Miná, which has also been attributed to Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon them):

...You have been afflicted by the greatest calamity, for you have been defeated in terms of the position of the scholars, only if you knew [or only if you cared]. That is because the direction of affairs and rules should be in the hands of those who have knowledge of God, and who are entrusted with what He has made lawful or unlawful...

Ibn Shubah al-Ḥarrānī, Tuḥnf al-ʿuqūl, p. 239. Clearly, the direction of hidden affairs and divine secrets is only in the hands of the scholars of spirituality, for they have arrived at the fountainhead of the shariah, have reached the source of every law, and are well aware of the mysteries and details of every soul.

There is another narration by Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) in this regard:

أَبَى اللهُ أَنْ يُحْرِيَ الْأَشْيَاءَ إِلَّا بِأَسْبَابٍ، فَجَعَلَ لِكُلِّ شَيْءِ سَبَباً، وَجَعَلَ لِكِلِ سَبَبٍ شَرْحاً، وَ جَعَلَ لِكُلِّ شَرْحٍ عِلْماً (عَلَماً)، وَجَعَلَ لِكُلِّ عِلْمِ بَاباً نَاطِقاً، عَرَفَهُ مَنْ عَرَفَهُ وَجَهِلَهُ مَنْ جَهِلَهُ، ذَاكَ رَسُولُ اللهِ (صلّى الله عليه وآله وسلّم) وَنَحْنُ.

God refrains from running things except through their means. So He has set a means for everything, an elaboration [in terms of conditions and definitions] for every means, a knowledge [or an emblem] for every elaboration, and a speaking expressive gate for every knowledge [or emblem]. One who recognizes the gate has recognized the means, and one who is ignorant of the gate is ignorant of the means. That [gate] is the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) and us.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:183; Majlisī, Bihar al-anwār, 2:90, quoted from Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣa r al-darajāt, p. 26, through two unconnected chains of transmission ($marf\overline{u}$) with slight variations.

In this narration, the Imām presents a general argument: In order to reach anything desired, one should refer to the specific means and causes through which that thing is achieved. Thus, it is evident that in the case of spiritual diseases, one should refer to a spiritual doctor, who is an expert in this field.

The clearest and most explicit of all narrations in this regard is the following sermon of Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him), where he offers an excellent description of such saintly scholars who lead the training and disciplining of the souls:

At all times, including when there are no prophets, there have been individuals with whom God—precious are His bounties—whispers in their minds and speaks through their intellects. Thus, they kindle the light of wakefulness in the ears, eyes and hearts of others, reminding them of the days of God, and warning them of His Status.

مِنْزِلَةِ الأَدِلَّةِ فِي الْفَلَوَاتِ، مَنْ أَخَذَ الْقَصْدَ حَبِدُوا إِلَيْهِ طَرِيقَهُ وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِالنَّجَاةِ، وَمَنْ أَخَذَ يَمِيناً وَ شِمَالاً ذَمُوا إِلَيْهِ الطَّرِيقَ وَحَذَّرُوهُ مِنَ الْمُلكَةِ. وَكَانُواكَذَلِكَ مَصَابِحَ تِلْكَ الظُّلْمَاتِ وَأَدِلَّةً تِلْكَ الشُّبُهَاتِ.

They are like guides in the desert. Whoever adopts the straight path, they praise his way and give him tidings of deliverance. And whoever deviates right or left, they condemn his way and warn him of failure. It is in this way that they are lamps in the darknesses, and guides against bewilderment.

وَإِنَّ لِلذَكْرِ لِأَهْلاَ أَخَذُوهُ مِنَ الدُّنَيَابَدَلاَ فَلَمَ تَشْغَلُهُمْ يَجَارَةُ وَلاَ يَنعُ عَنُهُ، يَفَطَعُونَ بِهِ أَيَّامَ الْحَيَاةِ وَ يَهْنِفُونَ بِالزَّوَاجِرِ عَنْ مَحَارِم اللهِ فِي أَسْمَاعِ الْفَافِلِينَ، وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَيَأْمَرُونَ بِهِ، وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ النَّكَوْدَيْنَنَاهُونَ عَنْهُ

Indeed, invocation (dhikr) has its people who have adopted it in lieu of this world (dunyā). Thus, no engagement in trade or sale distracts them from invocation, with which they pass their days. They cry in the ears of the heedless with deterring shouts against what God has forbidden. They command [them] to justice, and themselves act upon it; and they forbid [them from] evil, and themselves abstain from it.

فَكَأَتُمَا (فَكَأَنُهُمْ) فَطَمُوا الدُّنْيَا إِلَى الآخِرَةِ وَهُمْ فِيهَا فَشَاهَدُوا مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ، فَكَأَنَّمَا اطَّلَمُوا غُيُوبَ أَهْلِ الْبُرْزَخِ فِي طُولِ الْإِقَامَةِ فِيهِ وَحَقَّقَتِ الْقِيَامَةُ عَلَيْمٍ عِدَاتِهَا، فَكَشَفُوا غِطَاءَ ذَلِكَ لِأَهْلِ الدُّنْيَاحَتَّى كَأَنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَ مَالاَيْرَى النَّاسُ وَيَسْمَعُونَ مَالاَيْسَمَعُونَ...

It is as though they have finished the journey from this world to the Hereafter, and can observe what lies beyond this world. It is as if they perceive the mysteries of the inhabitants of the barzakh (the intermediate world between this world and the Day of Resurrection) in their long stay. It is as if the Resurrection has fulfilled its promises for them, and thus they have unveiled them for the people of this world—as if they see what the people see not, and hear what they hear not...

... يَغِجُونَ إِلَى رَبِهِمْ مِن مَقَامِ نَدَمِ وَاغْتِرَافِ، لَرَأَيْتَ أَعْلَامَ هُدَّى وَمَصَابِيحَ دُجْى، قَدْحَقْتْ بِهِمُ الثَّكَايُةِ وَ أُعِدَّتُ لَهُمْ أَفْوَابُ الشَّمَاءِ وَ أُعِدَّتُ لَهُمْ مَقَاعِدُ الشَّمَاءِ وَ أُعِدَّتُ لَهُمْ مَقَاعِدُ النَّكَرَامَاتِ، فِي مَفْعَدِ اطَّلَعَ اللهُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهِ، فَرَضِيَ سَعْيَهُمْ وَحَدِمَقَاتُهُمْ...

...They mourn to their Lord in regret and confession. [If you imagine them as such in your mind] you would then be observing the emblems of guidance, and the lamps in the darknesses. You would see the angels surrounding them, composure descending upon them, and the gates of the heavens opened to them. They are provided with seats of honor, in such a place where God looks upon them. He is pleased with their effort and exalts their position...

Nahj al-balāghah, Sermon 222. It is certainly these individuals that can take the responsibility of training the wayfarers on the path of God.

طئ این مرحله بی ممرهی خضر مکن ظلمات است بترس از خطر گمراهی

Without the company of Khidr Don't launch into this way;

There is much darkness therein Lest you should go astray.

Hafiz, ghazal 488.

- 18. Turkah İşfahānī has mentioned this poem (with slight variations) in his letter to Fīrūz Shāh. Turkah İşfahānī, Chahārdah risālah-yi Fārsī, p. 300; Tamhīd al-qawā'id, p. 259.
- 19. It has been narrated from Bayazīd that he said:

Even if you see a man that is endowed with such charismatic powers (karānāt) that he can rise up on the air, do not fall for him until you examine his adherence to the prescriptions and proscriptions of God, his observance of the limits [of religion], and his fulfillment of the shariah.

Abū Nucaym al-Isbahānī, Ḥīlyat al-awliyā², 10:40.

20. The following lines by Hāfiz (ghazal 188) are very relevant to this discussion:

مرابه رندی و عشق آن فضول عیب کند

که اعتراض بر اسرار علم غیب کند

کمال صدق و محبت بین نه نقص گناه

که هر که پی هنر افتد نظر به عیب کند

زعطرحوربهشت آن زمان بر آید بوی که خاک میکده ما عبیر جیب کند چنان بزد ره اسلام غمزهٔ ساقی که اجتناب ز صهبا مگر صهیب کند کلید گنج سعادت قبول اهل دل است مباد آن که در این نکته شاق و ریب کند شبان وادی ایمن گهی رسد به مراد که چند سال به جان خدمت شعیب کند ز دیل خون بجکاند فسانهٔ حافظ چو یاد عهد شباب و زمان شیب کند

Those who deny the secrets of divine, Are blaming my love and the freedom of mine.

Don't look at my sin, but look at my love, An artless person picks a flaw so fine.

The houri of Paradise would have an aroma, Only if she takes the fragrance of our wine.

The Tapster's face blew up my faith, The wind of His grace has broken my spine.

Being accepted by the people of the heart, Is the measure of success, given in one line.

The shepherd of Sinai would reach his Beloved, When he serves Shu^cayb (Jethro) for ten years or nine.

When Ḥāfiz speaks of his youth and his age, Some may weep blood and others may whine.

21. Nahj al-balāghah, Sermon 87. The sermon begins with:

O servants of God! Truly among the most beloved servants to God is a servant whom God has helped against his *nafs* (soul, self, ego)...

(Note that the original text was missing the part, "He has clung onto the most reliable of handles and the firmest of ropes.")

22. Nahj al-balāghah, Saying 147. This is a part of the Imām's advice to Kumayl, which begins with:

يَّاكُمَيْلَ ابْنَ زِيَادٍ، إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْقُلُوبَ أَوْعِيَةُ فَحَيْرُهَا أَوْعَاهَا...

O Kumail [ibn Ziyād], truly these hearts are containers; the best of them is the one that can hold the most [or the longest, or in the best way].

23. The verse is:

...Establish the prayer; truly the prayer forbids indecency and evil; and indeed the remembrance of God is greater... (29:45)

Many scholars have interpreted the verse like the author: The remembrance of God (*dhikr*) is greater than prayer (salān). However, this interpretation is not very plausible because of the following:

- Prayer is itself a type of dhikr. In fact, it is one of the most excellent forms of dhikr. The heart and soul of prayer is the presence of the heart, which is the true meaning of dhikr (remembrance). This is true of every aspect of prayer, whether it is an act or an utterance. [Therefore, it does not make sense to contrast the prayer with remembrance.]
- 2. The part of the verse that says, "The remembrance of God is greater" is actually a reason and justification for the previous part [which command to establish the prayer]. So the verse is saying: Prayer—which is the remembrance of God—forbids every indecency and evil, and it does so in the most effective way because the remembrance of God is greater than anything else that forbids indecency and evil. [tr: In other words, there should be no surprise that the prayer forbids every indecency and evil, because it is the remembrance of God, and the remembrance of God is greater and more effective than everything.]

Even if we do not take the latter part of the verse as a reason and justification for the former part, *dhikr* would not contrast with prayer. The meaning of the verse in that case would be: Prayer—which is the remembrance of God—forbids every indecency and evil, and God's remembrance—which is to be found in prayer—is greater and higher than every unlawful pleasure and joy.

[tr: Another possible meaning along these lines is: Prayer forbids every indecency and evil, and it is also the remembrance of God; yet its aspect of being the remembrance of God is greater and more fundamental than its aspect of forbidding every indecency and evil.]

3. The same religion and Prophet that have brought this verse view the prayer as the highest of all acts. The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) said:

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرُ مَوْضُوعٍ فَمَرْشَاءَ اسْتَقَلَ وَمَنْشَاءَ اسْتَكُثَّرَ.

The prayer is the best thing performed. Now, whoever wants shall do little [of it] and whoever wants shall do a lot.

Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī, Mustadrak al-wasā'll, 3:43.

الصَّلَاةُ مِيزَانُ مَن وَفَّ اسْتَوْفَ.

The prayer is a scale; whoever pays its due in full will get his share in full.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 3:267.

الصَّلَاةُ عَمُودُ الدِّينِ.

The prayer is the pillar of religion.

Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:286; Ṭūsī, al-Amālī, p. 529.

مَثَلُ الصَّلَاةِ مَثَلُ عَمُودِ الْقُسُطَاطِ...

The likeness of the prayer is the likeness of the center pole of a tent...

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 3:266.

أوَّلُ مايُنالُ الْعَبْدُ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِ.

The first thing that a servant is questioned about [in the Hereafter] is his prayer.

Muttaqī al-Hindī, Kanz al-ʿummāl, 7:282. [tr: This tradition is more often narrated as "The first thing for which a servant is held accountable..." Ibn Ṭāwūs, Falāḥ al-sāʾl wa najāḥ al-masāʾl, p. 127; Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, 'Awālī al-laʾālī, 1:318; Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 4:103; Nasāʾī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī, 7:83.]

الصَّلَاةُ قُرْبَانُ كُلِ تَقِيِّ.

The prayer brings every self-restrained person closer to God.

Nu^cmān ibn Muḥammad, Da ām al-Islām, 1:133; Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī, Mustadrak al-wasāʾl, 3:46. [tr: The above Prophetic narrations are sometimes reported from the Imāms as well, with slight variations in some cases.]

And most explicit of all is a narration by Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him), where Muʿāwiyah ibn Wahab says:

سَأَلْتُ أَبَاعَبْدِاللهِ (عليه السّلام) عَنْ أَفْضَلِ مَا يَتَقَرَّبُ بِهِ الْعِبَادُ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ وَأَحَبِ ذَلِكَ إِلَى اللهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ مَا هُوَ؟ فَقَالَ: مَا أَعْلَمُ شَيْناً مَعْدَ الْمُوفَةِ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ هَذِهِ الصَّلَاةِ، أَلَا تَرَى أَنَّ الْعَبْدَ الصَّلِحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْتَمَ (عليه السّلام) قال: (وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا ذَمْتُ حَيَّاً).

I asked the Imām, "What is the best thing by which the servants seek proximity to their Lord, and that which is most beloved to God, the Mighty and Majestic?" He replied, "After the knowledge [of God and His Messenger], I do not know anything better than the prayer. Do you not see that the righteous servant of God, Jesus son of Mary (peace be upon him), said, 'He has enjoined me to prayer and almsgiving so long as I live' (19:31)?"

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 3:264.

- 24. See Muḥammadī Rayshahrī, Mawsūʿnt al-ʿnqāʾid al-Islāmiyyah, 1:214; Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, ʿAwālī al-laʾālī, 2:57.
- 25. The following narrations are by Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him):

God, Mighty and Majestic is He, has truly said, "And that the final end is unto thy Lord" (53:42). So when speech reaches God, stop!

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:92; Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:237; Ṣadūq, al-Tawḥīd, p. 456; reported in all three sources with its chain of transmission from Sulaymān ibn Khālid.

When speech reaches God, stop! Speak of what is below the Throne, but do not speak of what is above the Throne. For indeed, some people spoke of what is above the Throne and because of this their intellects were bewildered. It was then such that when one of them was called from the front, he would respond to his rear, and when he was called from the rear, he would respond to his front.

NOTES ON CHAPTER FIVE

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 3:259-260, quoted from 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, Tafsīr al-Qummī, 1:25-26, mentioned under the verse, "And that the final end is unto thy Lord" (53:42), reported from Ibn Abī 'Umayr, from Jamīl ibn Darrāj.

Notes on Chapter Six

The number of obstacles on the path

- 1. The veils and obstacles on the spiritual path have been described in different ways. A list of the different views in this regard is as follows:
 - There is only one veil or obstacle, and that is the nafs (self, ego). This
 obstacle would be removed in either of three ways:

a. To know one's self: "Whoever gets to know his self, has surely known his Lord." Hurr al-cĀmilī, al-Jawāhir al-saniyyah, p. 116.

b. To purify and refine one's soul: "Felicitous is he who causeth it [his soul] to grow [or who purifieth it]." (91:9)

c. To go beyond one's self: "He has surely revived his intellect [or heart], and has killed his nafs..." Nahj al-balāghah, Sermon 220.

Some have identified the one obstacle as this world (dunyā), by which they mean anything other than God (mā siwá Allāh):

...Remove your hearts from this world before your bodies are removed from it...

Nahj al-balāghah, Sermon 203.

Others have held that the single obstacle in one's way is his existence (inniyyah), as noted in this poem (by Ḥallāj):

What holds me back is my being, Which lies between me and Thee;

So remove it from between us By Thy mercy and decree.

See Şadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, Asfār, 1:116.

 There are two obstacles: the world of the visible and the world of the unseen, or this world and the Hercafter, or the realm of creation (khalq) and the realm of the Divine command (amr):

> از تو تامقصود چندان منزلی در پیش نیست یك قدم بر هر دو عالر نه كه گامی بیش نیست

Between you and your goal Is not far of a race; Put a foot on both worlds; It's just a single pace.

Others have identified the two veils to be the outward path (shariah) and the spiritual path (tariqah); by observing these two, one will reach the truth (taqiqah).

3. There are three obstacles: the realm of nature (tab), the realm of form (mithāl), and the realm of intellect (faql). One would reach the desired destination by passing these realms.

4. There are four obstacles. It is narrated from Bāyazīd Basṭāmī that he said.

On day one, I renounced this world. The next day I renounced the next world. On day three, I renounced everything other than God. Then on the fourth day I was asked, "What is it that you want?"

مَا تُرِيدُ؟...أُرِيدُأَنَ لَا أُرِيدَ.

I said, "I want to not want [anything]."

See 'Attar, Tadhkirat al-awliya', p. 162.

The four steps have also been classified as:

- a. Renouncing this world.
- b. Renouncing the Hereafter.
- c. Renouncing the Master.
- d. Renouncing one's renunciation.

[tr: What is meant by renouncing the Master (i.e. God) is that one should have no want or desire—not even the desire to reach God and benefit from His vision or annihilation in His Essence. Renounc-

ing one's renunciation means to not see one's act of renunciation. If one does not see any existence for himself, then he will not ascribe any act or deed to himself, for there would be no subject for that act. This might also be the meaning of Imām 'Alī's narration,

The best *zuhd* is to hide your *zuhd* (disinterestedness in the affairs of this world, material objectives and carnal pleasures, also translated as asceticism, renunciation, and abstinence).

Nahj al-balāghah, Saying 28.]

The Five Divine Presences

5. There are five obstacles, corresponding to the Five Presences (allnchrät al-khams). These Five Presences have been referred to in a supplication that is attributed to Imām 'Alī (peace be upon him):

O God, illuminate my outside by Thy worship, my inside by Thy love, my heart by Thy vision, my spirit by Thy gnosis, and my secret [my inmost consciousness] by its complete attachment to Thy Threshold; O Lord of Majesty and Munificence.

Kabūdar-Āhangī, Rasā'il Majdhūbiyyah, treatise no. 5; Hamadānī, Baḥr al-ma'ārif, p. 309. The late Mawlá Ja'far Kabūdar-Āhangī has expounded on this supplication in his treatise as follows:

There are five general levels of existence, two of which are related to God, Glorified He is, and three of which are related to the world of creation. They are called the Five Universal Presences (al-hadarāt al-khams al-kulliyyah).

First is the Absolutely Hidden Realm (al-ghayb al-muṭlaq), which is also called the Hidden of the Hidden (ghayb al-ghuyūb), the Comprehensive Entity (ayn al-jam), the Reality of all Realities (haqūqat al-haqāʾiq), the End of all Ends (ghāyat al-ghāyāt), the Extremum of all Extremes (nihāyat al-nihāyāt), and the station of "or even nearer" (aw adnā, mentioned in 53:9).

Second is the Realm of the Names, which is the realm of God's manifestation as a god, where the existents subsist through God's knowledge of them. Thus, they are manifest to the Knower, but they are not manifest to themselves or their forms [i.e. their existence and subsistence is in the plane of God's knowledge (of their "permanent archetypes," al-a yān al-thābitah), but they have not been externally manifested]. Therefore they fall under the general sense of being hidden and unseen (ghayb). This realm is also called the Realm of the Attributes and Invincibility (hachat al-sifāt wa al-jabarūt), the First Intermediate Realm (barzakhiyyah ūlá), the Intermediate of all Intermediate Realms (barzakh al-barāzikh), the Meeting Point of the two Seas (majma al-bahrayn), the "two-bow's length" (qāb-i qawsayn, mentioned in 53:9), and the Realm that Encompasses all Entities (muhūt al-a yān).

Third is the Realm of Divine Actions, where the Truth (i.e. God) manifests as a Lord. It is also called the Realm of Spirits (arwāḥ), the Realm of the Divine Command (amr), The Realm of Lordship (Rubūbiyyah), the Related Hidden Realm (al-ghayb al-mudāf), and the Hidden Realm of the Unseen (ghayb bāṭin).

Fourth is the Realm of Forms (mithål) or the Imaginal World (khayål), where the Truth manifests in different forms (sing. sūrah) each of which denotes a certain meaning and reality.

Fifth is the Realm of Sovereignty (mulk) and the Senses (sing. hiss), where the Truth manifests in materially determined forms. This is the corporeal and sensible world.

In the last three realms, the existents have mental and conscious knowledge of themselves and things similar to them.

The Five Divine Presences are also mentioned by Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-ʿArabī when he sends blessings on the Seal of the Prophets, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd-Allāh (peace be upon him and his family):

اللَهُمَّ أَيْضُ صِلَةً صَلَوَاتِكَ وَسَلَامَةً شَلِمَاتِكَ عَلَى أَقَلِ التَّعَيُّنَاتِ الْمُفَاضَةِ مِنَ الْعَمَاءِ الرَّيَانِيَّ وَآخِرِ اللَّهَ أَيْفَ الْفَصَافَةِ إِلَى النَّوْعِ الْإِنْسَانِيِ، النَّهَاجِرِ مِنْ مَكَّةً كَانَ اللهُ وَلَمْ يَعُكُنَ مَعَهُ شَيْءُ ثَانِيَ إِلَى مَدِينَةً وَ هُوَ الْآنَ عَلَى مَا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ كَانَ، مُعْصِي عَوَالِمِ الْخَضَرَاتِ فِي وُجُودِهِ: (وَكُلُّ شَيْء مَدِينَةً وَهُو الْآنَ عَلَى مَا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ كَانَ، مُعْصِي عَوَالِمِ الْخَضَرَاتِ فِي وُجُودِهِ: (وَكُلُّ شَيْء أَخْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُبِينٍ).

O God, effuse Thy continued peace and blessing upon the first determination of the Lordly effusions, and the last one who descended from Thee toward humankind, who migrated from the Mecca (origin) where "here was God and there was nothing second to Him" to the Medina (destination) where "now He is as He has always been," the embracer of the Five Divine Presences in his being, about whom Thou hast said, "We have counted everything in a manifest leader" (36:12).

Ibn al-'Arabī, al-Salawat al-Muḥamadiyyah, pp. 3-16.

[tr: Qayṣarī has interpreted the Five Divine Presences as five levels of existential realms as follows: 1. The Absolutely Hidden Realm (al-ghayb al-muṭlaq), which is the realm of the permanent archetypes in God's exclusive knowledge. 2. The Related Hidden Realm (al-ghayb al-muḍā), which is lower than the former but connected to it, and which is the realm of the intellect. 3. The Realm of the Angels (malakāt), which is the imaginal world or the realm of forms. 4. The Realm of Sovereignty (mulk), which is the corporeal and sensible universe—the counterpart of the hidden realms. 5. The Comprehensive Realm (jāmi '), which is the realm of the Perfect Man, and which embraces the other four realms. Qayṣarī, Sharḥ-i Fuṣāṣ al-ḥikam, p. 90.]

Others have identified the five obstacles to be the realms of nature (tab), form ($mith\bar{a}l$), spirit ($r\bar{u}h$), secret (sirr) and essence ($dh\bar{a}t$). These realms will be discussed later on in the section on the types of unveilings ($muk\bar{a}shaf\bar{a}t$). See note 48 below.

6. There are seven stages: the realms of the senses, forms, intellects, the secret, the inmost secret (sirr mustasarr), the secret covered by a secret (sirr muqanna bi al-sirr), and the essence (dhāt). Some have talked about seven veils of darkness and materiality referred to as "the seven earths," and seven screens of light and immateriality, referred to as "the seven heavens."

There are also certain narrations that speak of seven veils. See Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:182; Ṣadūq, Man lā yaḥḍuruhu al-faqīh, 1:305 and Ilal al-sharāf; 2:322.

- 7. There are ten realms, corresponding to the ten degrees of faith—all of which Salmān al-Fārsī possessed [according to the narrations; see Şadūq, al-Khiṣāl, 2:448; Fattāl al-Nīsābūrī, Rawdat al-wāʿīzīn, 2:280.].
- 8. The late Khwājah Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī has classified the stages into six, where the first five are classified further into six stages each. Thus, he has described thirty-one realms. See Awṣāf al-ashrāf (Table of Contents).

Narrations about the obstacles on the path

 Some have said that there are seventy obstacles and veils, as the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) described his ascension (mi Yāj):

So I proceeded, and seventy veils were removed for me.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 18:391, quoted from Ibn Ṭāwūs, al-Yaqīn, p. 290, with its chain of transmission. [tr: In Biḥār al-anwār, the late Majlisī has mistakenly cited Kashf al-yaqīn instead of al-Yaqīn. Kashf al-yaqīn is a somewhat similar book but by 'Allāmah Ḥillī.]

10. Khwājah 'Abd-Allāh Anṣārī has classified the path into ten stages, each of which is composed of ten sub-stages, adding up to a total of one hundred. These one hundred stages correspond to a hundred Names of God, one of which is secret and hidden, while the other ninety-nine are known. This is in accordance with many narrations reported by both Shias and Sunnis that God [the All-Mighty] has ninety-nine Names. A few example are as follows:

Truly God, Blessed and Exalted is He, has ninety-nine Names—that is one hundred but one. Whoever counts them shall enter Paradise...

Şadūq, al-Tawhīd, p. 194ff and al-Khiṣāl, 2:593ff, reported with its chain of transmission from Sulaymān ibn Mihrān, from Imām Ṣādiq, from his fathers up to Imām ʿAlī, from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family). After reporting this narration in al-Khiṣāl, al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq says, "I have obtained different variations of this narration through different chains of transmission."

God, the Mighty and Majestic, has ninety-nine Names. The supplication of one who calls God by them shall be accepted, and one who counts them shall enter Paradise.

Şadūq, al-Tawliād, p. 195, reported with its chain of transmission from Abī al-Şalt al-Harawī, from Imām Riḍā, from his fathers up to Imām 'Alī, from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family).

إِنَّ بِلَهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى تِسْعَةً وَتِسْعِينَ اسْماً، مِانَةً إِلَّا وَاحِداً، إِنَّهُ وَتُرَيُّعِبُ الْوَثْرَ، مَنَ أَحْصَاهَا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةِ

Truly God, Blessed and Exalted He is, has ninety-nine Names. That is one hundred but one, for indeed He is odd and He likes the odd [in number]. Whoever counts them enters Paradise.

Şadūq, al-Tawḥīd, p. 219ff, reported with its chain of transmission from Abū Hurayrah, from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family).

[tr: For Sunni sources on this topic, see Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 7:160; Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 8:63.]

11. Based on some narrations, God has three hundred and sixty-one Names:

إِنَّ اللهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى خَلَقَ اسْمَا بِالْحُرُوفِ غَيْرَ مُتَصَوْتٍ وَبِاللَّفْظِ غَيْرَ مُنْطَقٍ وَبِالنَّحْصِ غَيْرَ مُحَدُوبُ وَبِاللَّفْظِ غَيْرَ مُنْطَقٍ وَبِالنَّحْصِ غَيْرَ مُحَدُوبُ وَبِالتَّشْبِيهِ غَيْرَ مَوْصُوبُ وَبِاللَّوْنِ غَيْرَ مَصْبُوغٍ ، مَنْفِيُّ عَنْهُ الْافْطَارُ مُبَعَّدُ عَنْهُ الْحُدُودُ مَحْجُوبُ عَنْهُ حِسُّ كُلِّ مُتَوَهِمٍ ، مُسْتَيِّرُ غَيْرُ مَسْتُورٍ ، فَجَعَلَهُ كَلِمَةً تَامَّةً عَلَى أَرْبَعَةِ أَجْزَاء مَعالَيْسَ مِنْهَا وَاحِدُ عَنْهُ حِسُّ كُلِ مُتَوهِمٍ ، مُسْتَيِرُ غَيْرُ مَسْتُورٍ ، فَجَعَلَهُ كَلِمَةً تَامَّةً عَلَى أَرْبَعَةِ أَجْزَاء مَعالَيْسَ مِنْهَا وَاحِدُ مَنْ فَالْمُ اللَّهُ الْمُ اللَّهُ اللللَّهُ اللَّهُ الللللَّهُ اللللْمُ اللَّهُ اللْمُ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ اللللْمُ اللَّهُ اللْمُ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ اللَّ

Truly God, Blessed and Exalted is He, created a Name with letters that are not articulated, by characters that are not uttered, by a person that is not embodied, by a symbolism that is not described, and by a color that is not colored. No region applies to it, and it is far from every boundary. It is covered without any veil, and the senses of every conceiver are blocked from it. So He made it a complete word, consisting of four parts that go hand in hand with each other, without any part preceding the other. He disclosed three of these Names to His creatures due to their need for them, and concealed the other one, which is the hidden secret Name.

فَهَذِهِ الْأَنْمَاءُ الَّتِي ظَهَرَتُ قَالظَّاهِرُ هُوَ اللهُ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى. وَسَخَّرَسُجُانَهُ لِكِلِّ اسْمٍ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأَسْمَاءِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَرْكَانٍ، فَذَلِكَ النَّا عَشَرَ زُكُناً. ثُمَّ خَلَقَ لِكُلِّ رُكُنٍ مِنْهَا ثَلَاثِينَ اسْمَا فِعْلاً مَنْسُوباً إِلَيْهَا، فَهُوَ الرَّحْنُ الرَّحِيمُ الْمِلْكُ الْقُدُوسُ... فَهَذِهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ وَ مَاكَانَ مِنَ الْأَسْمَاءِ الْحُسْنَى حَتَّى تَمِّ نَلَاثَ مِانَةٍ وَسِتِينَ اسْمَانَهِيَ نِسْبَةُ لِمَنِهِ الْأَسْمَاءِ الثَّلَانَةِ... وَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿قُلِ ادْعُوا اللهَ أُو ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيْاً مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْخُسْنَى ﴾.

The three Names that were disclosed are: God, "Blessed He is" (tabāraka) and "Exalted He is" (ta'ālā). Then He, Glorified He is, appointed four pillars for each of these [three] Names. That would be twelve pillars. Then for each pillar, He created thirty Names of Action that relate to that pillar. Those are the All-Merciful (al-Raḥmān), the All-Compassionate (al-Raḥmān), the Sovereign (al-Malik), the Sacrosanct (al-Quddās)... So these Names—and the other Most Excellent Names of God, which reach three hundred and sixty—relate to those three Names... This is the meaning of the verse, "Say: Call upon God, or call upon the All-Merciful; whichever [of His Names] you call upon, to Him belong the Most Excellent Names" (17:110).

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:112, reported with its chain of transmission from Ibrāhīm ibn 'Umar, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

- 12. There are a thousand veils, as God has a thousand Names.
- 13. There are seventy thousand veils and obstacles, as per the Prophetic narration:

...وَصَلْتُ إِلَى حُجْبِرَبِي، دَخَلَتُ سَبْعِينَ أَلْفَ حِجَابٍ بَيْنَ كُلِّ حِجَابٍ إِلَى حِجَابٍ مِن حُجْبِ الْعِزَّةِ وَالْقُدْرَةِ وَالْبَهَاءِ وَالْكَرَامَةِ وَالْكِبْرِيَاءِ وَالْعَظَمَةِ وَالنُّورِ وَالظُّلْمَةِ وَالْوَقَارِحَتَّى وَصَلْتُ إِلَى حِجَابِ الْجَلَالِ...

...When I reached the veils of my Lord, I entered into seventy thousand veils and passed through them one after another—the veils of might, power, splendor, nobility, grandeur, magnificence, light, darkness, elegance and perfection—until I reached the veil of majesty...

Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 18:398, quoted from Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Yaqīn*, p. 425. [tr: For a more elaborate discussion of these veils and obstacles, see Ḥusaynī Tihrānī, *Ma ʿād-shināsī*, 8:59-69.]

2. See pp. 57ff.

Narrations about every Muslim's duty to seek knowledge

3. This is a famous Prophetic narration that has been narrated through multiple paths (mustafidah). However, the addition of "Muslim woman"

(wa muslimah) is found in only a few sources, all of which have reported the narration with an unconnected chain of transmission (marf \bar{u}). These sources are:

- 1. Miḍsāḥal-sharīʿah, section 3, where Imām Ṣādiq interprets knowledge as "the knowledge of the soul," and section 62, where he interprets knowledge as "the knowledge of self-restraint (taqwā) and certitude (yaqīn)."
- 2. Ibn al-Shahīd al-Thānī, Ma'ālim al-dīn, p. 11, quoted from Kulaynī's al-Kāfī. However, the narration in al-Kāfī (1:30-31) does not have the addition of "Muslim woman." Therefore, the reference to al-Kāfī should have been added by the transcribers, or possibly by the author.
- 3. Fayd al-Kāshānī, al-Maḥajjah al-bayḍā², 1:4, quoted from Ghazzālī, lḥyā²al-ʿulūm. However, the narration in lḥyā²al-ʿulūm (1:3) does not have the addition of "Muslim woman."
- 4. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:177, quoted from Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsā ั้i, รัAพลิโร al-la
- 5. Fadl ibn al-Ḥasan Ṭabrisī, *Majma ^c al-bayān*, 1:32, in the author's introduction. There it says:

Reliable transmitters have narrated for us with an authentic chain of transmission (snhīhah) going up to Imām Riḍā, narrating from his fathers—a master and Imām narrating from another master and Imām—up to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family):

Seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim man and woman. So seek knowledge from where there are prospects of finding it...

This Prophetic narration as reported by the other sources does not include "Muslim woman." Some of these narrations are:

1. Seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim. So seek knowledge from where there are prospects of finding it...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:171, quoted from Ṭūsī, al-Amālī, pp. 487-488, reported with its chain of transmission from Imām Riḍā, from his fathers, from Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon them). This is apparently the same narration as the one previous one (from Majma ʿal-bayān), but without the addition of "Muslim woman."

A knowledgeable person among the ignorant is like a living person among the dead... Truly Seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:172, quoted from Ṭūsī, al-Amālī, p. 521, reported with its chain of transmission from Mujāshiʿī, from Imām Riḍā (or Imām Ṣādiq), from his fathers, from Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon them).

3. Seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim. Lo! Truly God loves the seekers of knowledge.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:172, quoted from Şaffār al-Qummī, Baṣā îr al-darajāt, p. 22, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

4. Seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:172, quoted from Şaffār al-Qummī, Baṣā îr al-darajāt, p. 23, reported from Imām Ṣādiq, from Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon them).

5. Seek knowledge even if it is in China, for truly Seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:180, quoted from Fattāl al-Nīsābūrī, Rawḍat al-wā ʿszīn, 1:11.

6. One who sets out [of his home or his town] seeking knowledge is like one who fights in the way of God. Truly Seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:179, quoted from Fattāl al-Nīsābūrī, Rawḍat al-wāʿsz̄m, 1:10, reported from Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon him). Except for this last one, the rest are all Prophetic narrations.

These narrations certainly intend Muslim men and women alike, even though they do not include the word muslimah (Muslim woman). What the word muslim means in these narrations is a Muslim as opposed to a non-Muslim, not a Muslim man as opposed to a Muslim woman. In other words, the term has been used in its general and generic sense, as one who has accepted Islam, as opposed to an infidel or disbeliever (kāfir). When a term is used as a genus (jins), it is neutral with respect to gender. There are other examples of this in Islamic law, where a genderless sense of a term is meant. For example:

...A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe [in peace]. A migrant is one who migrates away from sins...

Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:285. Muslim and muhājir in this narration include all Muslims and migrants, regardless of gender.

Narrations against acting without knowledge

4. The above narration has been reported with a slight variation in Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:206, quoted from Şadūq, al-Amālī, p. 507 and Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:198, reported in both sources from Ţalḥah ibn Zayd, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

Other narrations in this regard are:

One who acts without insight is like one who follows a mirage in a desert: The faster he goes, the farther away it gets.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:208, quoted from Mufīd, al-Amālī, p. 42, reported with its chain of transmission from Musá ibn Bakr, from "someone who heard this narration from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him)."

Indeed one who acts without knowledge is like one who travels on a wrong path. As he gets farther from his path, he gets farther away from his goal. But one who acts with knowledge is like one who travels on a clear path. Thus, one should see whether he is proceeding or receding.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:209, quoted from Nahj al-balāghah, Sermon 154.

If one acts without knowledge, what he ruins will be more than what he builds.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 1:208, quoted from Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:198, reported from Ibn Faḍḍāl, from "someone narrating from Imām Ṣādiq," from his fathers, from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family).

The four spiritual journeys

5. The grand mystics and gnostics have categorized the spiritual path into four journeys. Mullā Ṣadrā says,

You should know that there are four journeys for the wayfarers of the mystical path. The first journey is to journey from the creation (al-khalq) to the Truth (al-Haqq). The second one is to journey within the Truth by the Truth. The third one is to journey from the Truth to the creation by the Truth—which is the opposite of the first. And the fourth journey is to journey within the creation by the Truth—which is the opposite of the second journey in a sense.

Şadr al- Dīn al-Shīrāzī, Asfār, 1:13.

[tr: "Al-haqiqah means both truth and reality. It is related to God Himself, one of Whose names is al-Haqq or the Truth, and is that Whose discovery is the goal of Islamic philosophy." Nasr, "The Quran and Hadith as source and inspiration of Islamic philosophy," p. 29.

"When the word <code>haqq</code> is applied to God, it means that God is the absolutely true, right, real, and proper... God is <code>haqq</code> in the absolute sense, and everything other than God is <code>haqq</code> in a relative sense... The formula of <code>tawhid</code> tells us that there is no god but God, no <code>haqq</code> but the absolute <code>haqq</code> This <code>haqq</code> is transcendent, infinite, and eternal, and nothing else can be worthy of the name." Chittick, <code>Science</code> of the Cosmos, <code>Science</code> of the <code>Soul</code>, pp. 119-120.]

Ardor and intoxication are only to be found in the first journey

Love and intoxication only pertain to the first of the four spiritual journeys. The wayfarer's initial excitement and agitation subside in the

later journeys, and may even turn to composure, peace and serenity in certain stages. Ḥāfiẓ has captured the relationship between the first journey and the other three journeys in this poem:

Don't worship the wine throughout the year;
Drink for three months, and then have God-fear.

Ḥāfiz, ghazal 274.

The glosses of the late Sabzawari on the four journeys

On his glosses on Asfār, Sabzawārī has quoted the following description of the four journeys from 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī:

Journey means to direct the attention of the heart to the Truth, Exalted He is. There are four journeys:

- 1. Journeying to God from the stages of the *nafs* (soul, self, ego), until one reaches the "clear horizon" (*al-ufuq al-mubīn*, 81:23), which is the ultimate station of the heart and is where the manifestations of the Divine Names begin.
- 2. The journey in God by connecting to His Attributes and actualizing His Names. One continues this journey until he reaches the "highest horizon" (al-ufuq al-a 9a, 53:7), which is the ultimate realm of oneness (wāḥidiyyah).
- 3. Journeying higher to the Comprehensive Entity (fayn al-jam 9), which is the Realm of Absolute Unity (aladiyyah). That would be the station of "two-bow's length" (qāb-i qawsayn, 53:9) as long as there is some duality. Once the duality is removed, it would be the station of "or even nearer" (aw adná, 53:9), which is the utmost degree of guardianship (wilāyah).
- 4. The journey by God and from God, in order to make the imperfect perfect. This is the station of subsistence after annihilation (al-baqā ba tl al-fanā) and differentiation after concision (al-farq ba tl al-jam).

Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, $Asf\bar{a}r$, 1:18. The late Sabzawārī then discusses the stations of oneness and unity, what is meant by "heart" (qalb) and "spirit" $(r\bar{u}h)$, and how the mystics define the seven realms—which he interprets to be the seven stations of nature (ab), soul (nafs), heart (qalb), spirit $(r\bar{u}h)$, secret (sirr), the arcane (khafi) and the most arcane (akhfa). He then discusses the station of annihilation $(fan\bar{a})$ in God and classifies it into three stages: malnv, lams and lamla [tr: the three terms are basically synonyms, meaning dissolution, dissipation and fading away]. He says,

Maḥu is when the actions of a servant are annihilated in the actions of God, Exalted He is. *Tams* is when the attributes of a servant are annihilated in God's attributes. *Maḥŋ* is when a servant's existence is annihilated in God's.

Ibid., 1:21.

The glosses of the late Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshah'ī on the four journeys

The late Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshah'ī has provided a different description of the stages of annihilation. A summary of his glosses on Asfār is:

The first journey is the journey from the creation to the Truth by means of removing the veils of darkness and light. The veils of darkness pertain to the *nafs* (soul, ego), and the veils of light pertain to the heart and the spirit. Therefore, not only should a way-farer go beyond what illuminates in his heart, but he should also go transcend his spiritual illuminations. He should move from the station of the soul to the station of the heart, from there to the spirit, and from the spirit to his farthermost destination. Thus, there are three realms that separate a wayfarer from the Truth. All of the veils that have been mentioned in the narrations or by the mystics can be reduced to these three veils.

When the wayfarer completes the three realms of soul, heart and spirit, these three veils are removed and he begins the second journey. There he reaches the station of gnosis of God's beauty, and annihilates his essence in the Truth. This is called the station of annihilation in God's Essence, and it consists of three substations: the secret, the arcane and the most arcane. Sometimes, what we mentioned as the station of the spirit is divided into two stations called the stations of the intellect and the spirit, where the immaterial visions in the latter are more differentiated and detailed than the former. Hence, there would be a total of seven stations in the first two journeys: the stations of soul, heart, intellect, spirit, secret, the arcane and the most arcane.

These seven stations are the degrees of God's friendship (wilā) and the cities of love:



The seven cities of love 'Attar did complete, But we are caught up in the first street. [tr: This poem is attributed to Rūmī, but it is not found in his *Divan*. Its real composer is unknown.]

The end of the first journey is when the wayfarer passes the station of the spirit, whereby the beauty of the Truth manifests for him and he annihilates himself in God's Essence. That is when malnu (dissolution) occurs for the wayfarer, his existence becomes divine (i.e. subsistence by God), and he reaches the station of divine guardianship (wilāyah).

The wayfarer would start the second journey in the station of secret (sirr) which corresponds to the Essence of the Truth. He would travel through the degrees of perfection one by one, until the point where he has seen all of God's perfections, and finds himself annihilated in all of the His Names and Attributes. This is where the wayfarer "hears by God, sees by God, walks by God, and grasps by God." [See Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:291; Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:352.]

Whereas the secret (*sirr*) is the station where one is annihilated in God's Essence, the arcane (*khafi*) is a higher station, where one is annihilated in God's Names, Attributes and Actions. Then the most arcane (*akhfá*) is the highest stage in the second journey, where one is annihilated from his two previous annihilations (in God's Essence and Names, respectively).

One can also say that the *sirr* is the last stage of the first journey and the first stage of the second journey. Likewise, *akhfá* is the last stage of the second journey, whereby the circle of guardianship is completed, the person's annihilation ends, and the third journey begins.

Therefore, the first journey is the journey through the realm of humanity $(n\bar{x}\bar{u}t)$, the realm of angels $(malak\bar{u}t)$ and the realm of immaterial intellects $(jabar\bar{u}t)$, while the second journey is the journey through the realm of the Divine Names $(l\bar{a}h\bar{u}t)$.

The third journey is the journey from the Truth to the creation by the Truth. It is a journey through the Divine Actions (af al). It is superior to the second journey because the wayfarer's intoxication and dissolution end, even though his three annihilations continue (i.e. his annihilation in God's Essence, his annihilation in God's Names, and his annihilation from the two annihilations). He subsists by God's subsistence in complete sobriety, sees everything related to the realms of the immaterial intellects, angels and humanity, and informs [others] of the gnosis of the Divine Essence, Attributes and Actions.

See Qumshah'i, Majmū'ahāthār-i ḥakān-i ṣahbā, p. 209ff.

The description of the four journeys by the late Nuri

The late Mīrzā Ḥasan Nūrī—the son of the famous philosopher, Mullā 'Alī Nūrī—has a clear and simple explanation in this regard that is understandable for the common people. A summary of his glosses on Asfār is:

As long as one has not begun intellectual and practical way-faring, he sees multiplicity and plurality (kathrah) all around him. All this multiplicity blocks him from observing unity (waḥdah), and he remains heedless of it.

But when he begins his intellectual journey, he will look for the cause of every phenomenon and the creator of every existent. Thus, multiplicity gradually fades away and translates into true and real unity, to the point where the person does not see any multiplicity anymore. Then he would only see unity, without seeing the limited and particular beings of things. At that point, the unity veils him from seeing multiplicity. He is veiled from seeing multiplicity because he is immersed in observing unity.

In terms of practical realization, that would be the first journey of the gnostic wayfarers that Mullā Şadrā is talking about. It is the journey from the creation to the Truth, meaning from multiplicity to unity.

Once the person reaches the realm of unity and is blocked from seeing pluralities, he will intellectually prove and deduce God's Names, Attributes and Actions one after the other based on His Essence. [tr: That is, he starts with his knowledge of God's Essence, which is absolutely One, and then derives His many Names, Attributes and Actions. Of course, knowledge and intellectual proof here means vision and intuition, not a mental derivation or proof.] This is the practical realization of the second journey, which is the journey in the Truth by the Truth.

It is called a journey "in the Truth" (fī al-Ḥaqq) because it is a journey in God's Names and Attributes. It is a journey "by the Truth" (bi al-Ḥaqq) because it is a stage where the wayfarer has left behind his existence and the existence of all beings and pluralities, has been annihilated in God's Names and Attributes, and thus he demonstrates God's reality.

At this stage, the wayfarer may experience the expansion of his breast and the loosening of his tongue, such that he would see unity in plurality and plurality in unity, without either one veiling him from the other. Thus, he would encompass both realms (of unity and plurality) and would stand at a station between the two. Now, he would have the capacity to teach those who have

not reached perfection, and guide those who are weak in reason and spirit.

This is practically the third journey, which is the journey from the Truth to the creation by the Truth. But there is yet a higher stage in terms of subtlety, strength and perfection: to prove the existence of God and the existence of everything else only by God, such that no other existence is a means or intermediary for proving the existence of God or the existence of anything else.

This is called the proof of lima (proving the effect by the cause) or the way of the truthful ($siddiq\bar{m}$). It would match the fourth journey, which is the journey in the creation by the Truth.

Şadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, Asfār, 1:16-17. As we see, the late Nūrī has matched the intellectual stages of divine philosophy with the spiritual perfections of the mystics. He has made a comparison between the practical stations of wayfaring and the different levels of proofs for God's existence, Majestic and Mighty He is.

Most lamentations, entreaties and inner upheavals that wayfarers experience are in their first journey, where they are captured by God's attractions and raptures that drive them to His Sacred Threshold.

In their second journey, the wayfarers are totally immersed in observing God's beauty in its manifestations in the contingent world. Perhaps the following poems by the late Hājj Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī concerns this station [the second journey]:

شورش عشق تو در هیچ سری نیست که نیست رفتان سک کویت مده شب تا سحری نیست که نیست رفتان به فغان سک کویت مده شب تا سحری نیست که نیست نه مدین از غم او سینه ما صد چاک است داغ او لاله صفت برجگری نیست که نیست موسنی نیست که دعوی آنا انحق شنود و رنه این زمزمه اندر شجری نیست که نیست چشم ما دیده خقاش بود و رنه تو را پرتو حسن به دیوار و دری نیست که نیست

No head is without the fervor of Thy love; No eye is missing the beauty of Thy face.

The dogs of Thy city are crying day and night, For the grief and sorrow that they see in my case.

It's not my heart alone that's burning in His love, His love and every heart are in a tender embrace. Every tree is saying, "I am the Truth," But where is a Moses who can hear that in grace?

We're blind like bats, but other than that, The beauty of Thy face is all over the place.

Dihkhudā, Lughatnānah, under Sabzawārī.

The third and fourth spiritual journeys in the supplication of ^cArafah

Some manuscripts of Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs' lqbā al-a māl include an addition at the end of Imām Ḥusayn's (peace be upon him) supplication on the Day of 'Arafah (9 Dhū al-Ḥijjah). The following parts of this added supplication could pertain to some of the stations experienced by wayfarers in their third and fourth journeys:

...إِلَي إِنَّ اخْتِلَاتَ تَعْبِيرِكَ وَسُرْعَةً طُوّاءِ مَقَادِيرِكَ مَنَعَاعِبَادَكَ الْعَارِفِينَ بِكَ عَنِ الشُكُونِ إِلَى عَطَاءِ وَ الْتَأْسِ مِنْكَ فِي بَلَاءٍ...كَيْفَ يُسْتَدَلُ عَلَيْكَ مِمّا هُوَ فِي وُجُودِهِ مُفْتَقِرُ إِلَيْكَ؟ أَيَكُونُ لِمَنْ إِلَيْكَ؟ مَنَى غِبْتَ حَقَّى عَبَاكَ إِلَيْكَ؟ أَيكُونُ لِنَبْرِكَ مِنَ الظّهُورِ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ حَقَّى يَكُونَ هُوَ النَظْهِرَ لَكَ؟ مَتَى غِبْتَ حَقَّى عَبَاحَ إِلَى دَلِيلٍ يَعْلَى اللّهُ عَلَى ا

...O God, truly the variations of Thy planning and the speed at which Thy ordinance unfolds prevent Thy servants who know Thee from resting assured in times of blessings, or losing hope in times of tribulation...

How can one prove Thee by something that depends on Thee in its own existence? Does anything have any manifestation that is not Thine, so that it may make Thee manifest? When have Thou been hidden so that Thou would need a proof to guide toward Thee? When have Thou been away so that one would need Thy signs to reach Thee? The eye that does not see Thee watching over it is blind, and a servant that has no share of Thy love is in loss...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 95:225-226. [tr: The late editor, Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, has discussed this supplication in detail in the first volume of Allān shināsī, where he proves that this part of the supplication (the addendum) is by Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh al-Iskandarī and not by Imām Ḥusayn. Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, Allāh shināsī, 1:268-273. Also see Chittick's note on A Shi'ite Anthology, p. 128.]

6. See p. 45.

Narrations concerning lenience and moderation

There are two narrations by Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) in this regard:

...Truly knowledge is the friend of a believer, tolerance is his vizier, reason is the general of his army, lenience is his brother, and benevolence is his father.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:47, reported from 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ghālib.

Truly knowledge is the friend of a believer, tolerance is his vizier, patience is the general of his army, lenience is his brother, and mildness is his father.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 75:244, quoted from Ibn Shuʿbah al-Ḥarrānī, Tuḥnf al-ʿuqūl, p. 361. A similar narration has been reported from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) in Biḥār al-anwār, 74:158, quoted from Tuḥaf al-ʿuqūl, p. 55, and another one from Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon him) in Biḥār al-anwār, 74:421, quoted from Mufīd, al-Irshād 1:303.

8. The Messenger of God (peace be upon them and their family) said,

O 'Alī, truly this religion is strong. So enter it with moderation, and do not make the worship of your Lord hateful to yourself. Indeed the immoderate person—that is, one who picks up excessive load—neither travels any distance nor maintains his mount. Thus, act as a person who hopes to die at an old age, and have fear like the fear of one who thinks he will die tomorrow.

Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 68:213-214, quoted from Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 2:87, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). A similar narration is reported in Sharīf al-Raḍī, *al-Majāzāt al-nabawiyyah*, p. 244. In another narration, the Messenger of God said,

إِنَّ هَذَا الدِّينَ مَتِينُ فَأَوْغِلُوا فِيهِ بِرِفْقٍ، وَلَا تُكَرِّمُوا عِبَادَةَ اللهِ إِلَى عِبَادِ اللهِ، فَتَكُونُوا كَالرَّاكِبِالنُبْتِ الَّذِي لَاسَفَراْفَطَعَ وَلَاظَهْراَأَبْقَ.

Truly this religion is strong. So enter it (awghilū, from ighāl and wughūl) with moderation, and do not make God's worship hateful to God's servants. Otherwise, you would be like an immoderate rider (al-munbatt) who neither travels any distance nor maintains his mount.

Qummī, Safīnat al-biḥār, 2:113 and Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 68:211-212, quoted from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:86, reported from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him). Qummī then adds:

Note: Ighāl means to journey quickly and intensely. Therefore the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) means, "You should journey in this religion with moderation." It might also be that ighāl here is transitive form of wughāl, which means to enter something. Then the sentence would mean, "Make the people enter this religion with moderation."

Al-Munbatt means one who has been cut off in his journey and whose mount has died. It is from the root al-batt, which means to cut.

- 9. Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 68:213, quoted from Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 2:86, reported with a connected chain of transmission from Ḥafṣ ibn al-Bakhtarī, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).
- 10. [tr: Loyalty here means to observe the commitments that a wayfarer makes with his spiritual master as he embarks on the path, and the duties that he takes on himself as he combats his nafs (self). It could also be a reference to every human being's covenant with God to only worship Him (7:172, 36:60-61). Neither the author nor the editor has elaborated on the condition of loyalty (wafā), perhaps because it is self-evident, or because it is covered under the next condition. Needless to say, many of these conditions of wayfaring are related and interdependent.]

State (hal) vs. station (maqam)

11. [tr: In this context, a state (*Inl*) is a spiritual condition, experience or realization that is temporary and passing. It is often in the form of periods of expansion, ease and joy, fluctuating with periods of contraction, stress and grief. A station (*maqām*), on the other hand, is when a spiritual condition or quality has become permanent and established in the soul. Qushayrī distinguishes between them as follows: "States are [divine] gifts, whereas stations are earnings. States come without asking, where-

as stations are acquired by the sweat of one's brow. The possessor of a station is firmly established in it, whereas the possessor of a state can be taken out of his state [at any moment]." Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism, p. 78.]

12. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 3:274-275, reported from Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyá, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from Ḥammād, from Ḥarīz; Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 68:219, quoted from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:82, reported from cAlī ibn Ibrāhīm, from his father, from Ḥammād, from Ḥarīz, from Zurārah. Another version of this parration is:

Know that the beginning of the [prayer] period is always better [than leaving it for later]. So hasten with what is good as much as you can. The most beloved of acts to God, Mighty and Majestic is He, is what a servant is consistent with, even if it is not much.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 68:216, quoted from Ibn Idrīs 'Ijlī, al-Sarā'r, 3:586, reported from Ḥarīz, from Zurārah, from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him).

The four stages of self-vigilance

13. [tr: There are four stages of self-vigilance (murāqabah): 1. To perform what is obligatory and avoid what is forbidden. 2. To abstain and restrain one's self even from lawful pleasures. In other words, the wayfarer should try to do anything that he does solely for God's pleasure, and should not engage in pastime and vain occupations. 3. To feel one's self in the presence of god and under His watch at all times. 4. Not only that, but to feel God's presence and observe His beauty at all times, as if one is seeing Him by the heart. See Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, Kernel of the Kernel, pp. 92 and 118.

The last two stages are perhaps deduced from the famous narration,

Worship God as though you see Him—and if you cannot see him, He nonetheless sees you.

Miṣbāḥ al-sharī'ah, section 100. The narration is also reported with "Fear God" (khaf-i-llāh, ikhsh-Allāh, an takhsh-Allāh) or "Act for God" (an ta 'mala li-Allāh) instead of "Worship God," and it is sometimes identi-

fied as the meaning of *iḥṣān* (excellence, righteousness). Different versions of this narration are reported in Shia and Sunni sources from the Prophet Muḥammad and Imām Ṣādiq. See Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:68; Ṭūsī, al-Amālī, p. 526; Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 2:53, 1:319 and 2:107; Muttaqī al-Hindī, Kanz al-Summāl, 1:275 and 3:21.]

Narrations concerning self-reckoning

14. Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) said:

...Lo! Take account of yourselves before you are taken account of, because there are indeed fifty stops on the Day of Judgment, each of which is a thousand years long [of your counting]: "In a day whose span is fifty thousand years" (70:4).

Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 67:64, quoted from Ṭūsī, *al-Amāl*ī, p. 110-111 and Mufīd, *al-Amālī*, p. 274-275, reported with a connected chain of transmission from Ḥafṣ ibn Ghiyāth. [tr: The original narration quotes verse 70:4, but the one in *Biḥār* quotes verse 32:5 which does not include "fifty."]

15. Imām Kāzim (peace be upon him) said:

A person is not one of us unless he takes account of himself every day: If he has done any good he should ask God for more, and if he has done any evil he should ask God for forgiveness and repent to Him.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:453, with a connected chain of transmission from Ibrāhīm ibn 'Umar al-Yamānī. This is a part of the long and detailed advice that the Imām gave Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam; Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 75:296ff, quoted from Ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī, Tuḥaf al- 'suqūl, p. 383ff.

The following verse of the Quran also establishes the necessity of self-reckoning:

O believers, fear God. And let every soul consider what it hath sent ahead for tomorrow. And fear God; truly God is All-Aware of what you do. (59:18)

- 16. [tr: Perhaps he abstained from drinking cold water, or from drinking water during the day. It may also have been that he really did not drink water for a year, and lived only by the water ingested through food. Even if taken literally and in its most extreme form, such self-discipline is not impossible, although a modern mind might find it difficult to comprehend. Even nowadays there are individuals around the world who endure similar or harder austerities.]
- 17. See Majlisī, Bihār al-anwār, 27:167ff.
- 18. See Shahīd al-Awwal, al-Durrah al-bāhirah, p. 16; Sarakhsī, al-Mabsūt, 10:209.
- 19. [tr: Najd is the highlands of the Arabian Peninsula.]
- 20. In this sentence, the scholars of religion are the jurists and the experts of Islamic law. As with the "sheikh," it is apparently the same as the "master" (ustād), and only serves as an interpretation for it.

Or it might be that sheikh here refers to the person whom the general master has appointed for a wayfarer's training and education. It used to be a common custom that when someone referred to a general master to embark on the spiritual path, the master would relegate him to one of his pupils for the initial groundwork and preparation. Once the person had passed the initial training and showed his talents and capabilities, he would continue on the path under the direct supervision of the master.

The training and instruction of a student by the late Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Malikī Tabrīzī

It has been narrated that the late Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Malikī Tabrīzī had the honor of accompanying the great saint and mystic, the late Ākhūnd Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī (may God be pleased with them) for fourteen years. The late Mīrzā Jawād narrated,

One day my master told me, "The training of so-and-so is upon your shoulders." So I engaged in the training of that pupil, and found him to possess a brilliant determination and diligence on the path. After six years of self-vigilance and spiritual combat, he completed the prerequisites and the preliminary stages of tajarrud (immateriality, detachment from worldly matters). He was thus capable of being invested with the station of tajarrud, but I wanted my master to bestow this effusion upon him. So I took him to my master and said, "This gentleman has fulfilled his duty, and we want him to be graced by your blessed hands."

The late Akhund pointed with his blessed hand [at him] and said, "Tajarrud is like this." That pupil later told me, "I immediately found myself departing my body, and saw my whole body sitting there as we were."

[tr: For more on witnessing the immateriality of one's soul, see Husaynī Tihrānī, Kernel of the Kernel, pp. 20-22.]

21. The poem is by Majnūn (Qays ibn al-Maluwwah al-ʿĀmirī). The following lines are also attributed to him:

I kiss the place where she took a pace; So why shouldn't I kiss her house and place?

A passing visit would've made me sad; But now I'm happy with an illusion of her face.

Narāqī, Khazā'in, p. 306-307.

22. [tr: The case of supplication is quite complicated and personal. It varies from person to person, and it even varies in one person based on his mood and condition. Thus it is not easy to give a single rule that would be applicable to everyone and every condition. Sometimes a servant is so intimate with his Lord and so absorbed in talking with his Beloved that he is not cognizant of his being, let alone the guidelines of courtesy and good manners. There is an expression saying:

بَيْنَ الْأَخْبَابِ تَنفُظُ الْآدَابُ.

The manners that a person should attend, Is not for him and his friend.

Hence, what is mentioned in the text only applies to certain stages (at the beginning of the path) and has its own conditions.

این قباس ناقصان بر کار رب جوشش عشق است نه از ترک ادب بیادبتر نیست کس زو در جهان با ادبتر نیست کس زو در نهان بیادب باشد چو ظاهر بنگری چونبه باطن بنگری دعوی کجاست؟ او و دعوی پیش آن سلطان فناست The most impolite is none but the lover; And the politest of all is also the lover.

For his claim of love, he's apparently impolite; This is a claim of status and height.

> But there is no claim inside his heart; From his Beloved he is not apart.

The objections that he makes toward his Lord Are eruptions of love, not rancor or discord.

Rūmī, Mathnawī, vol. 3, lines 3679, 3681 and 3683-3684.]

- 23. This is narrated from Bāyazīd Basṭāmī. See 'Aṭṭār, Tadhkirat al-awliyā', p. 162. Also see the fourth point under note 1 above.
- 24. [tr: A wayfarer should leave it all to his Master. He should only care about what God wills and pleases, whether he gets to see God's beauty or not, whether he will reach Him or not, whether he will come to know the mysteries and Divine gnosis or not, and whether he will be accepted by his Beloved or not.]
- 25. "Love" is a quality (sifah) and "beloved" is the qualified (mawsūt). [tr: A quality is a specific angle or perspective from which an essence (the qualified) is looked at. Therefore, a quality is some delimitation and determination (ta nyyun) on the essence.] As long as there is a quality, it means that the person has not passed the determinations [of the Essence] and has not reached his destination, which is to annihilate in the Essence of the Beloved. Thus, the wayfarer should get to a point where the attribute of love has burnt up and faded away, whereby the titles of love, lover and beloved would not hold anymore.

The late Qādī's method of "incineration" (iḥrāq) as a means to uproot the motives and desires of the soul

Here is description of the late $Q\bar{a}q\bar{i}$'s way of combating the desires of one's soul (nafs) [elaborated on by the editor]:

The best and fastest way to exterminate the desires and motives of the soul is called "incineration" (*iḥrāq*), which is very effective in the spiritual journey and is like a shortcut that saves the wayfarer once and for all. It takes him away from every objective and intention other than God, and eventually takes him out of the qualities and attributes [which delimit and block the Essence]. This is a method taught by the Glorious Quran.

For example, when a person is struck by an affliction, such as the loss of a spouse or child, he might comfort and console himself by different means. For instance, he could tell himself, "Perhaps this wife or child would have been a cause of my misfortune and harm in the future," or "Perhaps they would have made me exhausted trying to meet their wants and requests," or "There are many other individuals who have lost and will lose their wives and children like me."

However, the Glorious Quran says,

...Give good tidings to the patient & Who, when an affliction striketh them, say, "Truly we belong to God, and truly to Him we return." (2:155-156)

It means that God is the absolute owner of everything, and a human being has no claim to any ownership whatsoever. All property is God's property. An owner manages his property as he wants, can make any changes that he so desires to his belongings, and no one has the right to object or interfere in this. This mentality and way of thinking relieves an afflicted person immediately.

Likewise, a person might get stressed, worried and disturbed for missing his material or immaterial objectives. But when he refers to the Quran and finds out that he is in utter need and poverty in his essence, his anxiety will be over. He will realize that anything that he is given does not belong to him, but it belongs to God, and his essential need and poverty is inseparable from his very self. [tr: Realization here is not a merely mental affirmation. Rather, it is a spiritual experience, where one comes in direct contact with some reality, and tastes and embraces it with all of one's soul—much like how one experiences pain or pleasure. It is an existential realization, and is achieved by spiritual wayfaring, opposing one's desires, and contemplation.]

On the spiritual path, one should realize that God has made his soul greedy and ambitious, that is, he has an unlimited desire for every station and karāmah (charismatic power, divine grace). However, he will not reach his destination unless he dispenses with this inner desire and greed. He should completely forget about anything that his soul desires once and for all—including any spiritual achievement or karāmah that he longs for. It is only when a person frees himself from every wish and desire that his mind will be purified of everything other than his Beloved. That is when the Divine Beauty manifests for him. This thought and realization has the impact of burning every wish and attribute that a person might have, and this is why this method is called the method of "incineration."

[tr: See Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, *Kernel of the Kernal*, pp. 101-102.]
26. The following statement has been narrated from Bāyazīd Basṭāmī:

Paradise is of no significance to the lovers. The lovers are veiled [from Paradise] by their love.

Abū Nu^caym al-Iṣbahānī, Ḥīlyat al-awliyā², 10:36. One can also say that the people of Paradise are veiled from the vision of their Lord because of their love and attachment to Paradise, for Paradise is something other-than-God and therefore it is a veil.

[tr: Perhaps the second part of the quote was originally as follows:

The people of the Garden are veiled [from God's vision or any pleasure beyond the Garden] by their Garden.

The editor's explanation also corresponds to this, and it is more plausible than what is quoted in \cancel{H} ilyat al-awliy \vec{a} ?

Narrations concerning silence

- 27. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 68:285 and 68:295, quoted respectively from Ibn Idrīs 'Ijlī, al-Sarā'ir, 3:594 and Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:113, reported with its chain of transmission in both narrations from Ibn Maḥbūb, from 'Abd-Allāh ibn Sinān, from Abū Ḥamzah, from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him).
- 28. The full narration is:

Silence is the slogan of those who have realized the realities that have been ordained—the realities inscribed by the Pen of Decree, the ink of which has dried after their writing [i.e. there is no change to them]. It is the key to every comfort in this world and the Hereafter. In it lies the pleasure of the Lord, the lessening of one's reckoning [in the Hereafter], and one's protection against mistakes and errors.

قَدْ جَعَلَهُ اللهُ سِتْراً عَلَى الْجَاهِلِ وَزَيْناً لِلْمَالِمِ، وَمَعَهُ عَزْلُ الْهَوَاءِ، وَرِيَاضَهُ النَّفْسِ، وَ حَلَاوَةُ الْعِبَادَةِ، وَزَوَالُ قَسْوَةِ الْقَلْبِ، وَالْعَفَاتُ، وَ الْمُرَوَّةُ، وَ الظَّرْفُ. فَأَغْلِقْ بَابَ لِسَانِكَ عَمَّا لَكَ بُدُّ مِنْهُ، لَا سِيُمَاإِذَالَرْجِّدِذَا هَلاً لِلْكَلَامِ وَالْسَاعِدَ فِي الْذَاكَرَةِ لِلَّهِ وَفِي اللهِ.

God has made it a cover for [the errors of] those who are ignorant, and an ornament [of gravity] for those who are knowledgeable. It brings with itself the dismissal of desires, the discipline of the soul, the sweetness of worship, the disappearance of hardheartedness, [and it also brings] piety, nobility and wit. So lock the gate of your tongue on anything that you can, especially when you find no one who would be worthy of your speech and would aid you in having conference for God and in His cause.

وَكَانَ رَبِيعُ بْنُ خُنَيْمٍ يَضَعُ قِرْطَاساً بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَيَحْتُبُ مَا يَتَكَلَّمُ ثُمَّ يُحَاسِبُ نَفْسَهُ فِي عَشِيَّتِهِ مَالَهُ وَ مَاعَلَيْهِ، وَيَقُولُ: أَوْلَو (أَوْهِ)، نَجَاالصَّامِتُونَ وَبَقِينَا.

Rabī^c ibn Khuthaym used to have a paper on which he would write every word that he uttered [during the day]. Then he would take account of himself at night to see if what he had said was to his advantage or disadvantage. There he used to say, "Alas! Alas! The silent ones were delivered, while we still remain [because of the reckoning of our words]."

وَكَانَ بَعْضُ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللهِ (صلّى الله عليه وآله وسلّم) يَضَعُ حَصَاةً فِي فَمِهِ، فَإِذَا أَرَادَ أَن يَتَكَلَّمَ بِمَا عَلِمَ أَنْهُ لِلّهِ وَفِي اللهِ وَلِوَجْهِ اللهِ أَخْرَجْهَا. وَإِنَّ كَثِيراً مِنَ الصَّحَابَةِ كَانُوا يَتَنَفَّسُونَ تَنَفَّسَ الصُّعَدَاه (النَّذِقَى) وَيَتَكَلَّمُونَ شِبْهَ المُرْضَى.

Some of the Companions of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) used to put pebbles in their mouths. When one of them wanted to say something that he knew was for God, in His cause, and for His pleasure, he would take the pebble out of his mouth [and say it].

There were many Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) that used to sigh out of grief [or used to breathe like one who is about to drown and has no relief] and speak as if they were ill.

وَإِنَّاسَبُ هَلَاكِ الْخَلْقِ وَنَجَاتِهِمُ الْكَلَامُ وَالصَّمْتُ. فَطُوبِى لِنَ رُزِقَ مَعْرِفَةَ عَنْبِ الْكَلَامِ وَ صَوَابِهِ، وَعَلِمُ الصَّمْتَ وَفَوَائِنَ ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَخْلَاقِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَشِعَارِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ. Indeed what makes people perish or saved is speech and silence. Therefore, blessed is one who has been endowed with the ability to identify what speech is appropriate and what speech is inappropriate, and has realized what silence is and what its benefits are, for indeed, it is among the qualities of the prophets and the slogans of the chosen ones.

One who realizes the limits of speech would [then] hold fast to silence. [Or, one who realizes the worth of speech would not speak without pondering and would not engage in vain and pointless talk, for he knows that his speech is more precious than that.] If one learns about the secrets and subtleties involved with silence, and [thus] makes it a guardian over his [inner and spiritual] treasures, then his speech and silence would all be worship—a worship that no one shall discover except the Invincible King.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 68:284-285, quoted from Miṣbāḥ al-sharī ah, section 27.

- [tr: 1. The original meaning of shi ar—translated above as "slogan"—is clothing that touches the hair (sha r) and skin of one's body. Thus, in many narrations, shi ar refers to a trait or quality that is always with a person and is never separated from him. Perhaps the commonly used meaning of slogan and motto is also derived from the same original meaning, because a slogan indicates a principle that one adheres to.
- 2. Note that silence in these contexts is to abstain from talking, not to be in a noiseless environment. Hence, silence does not contradict listening to the Quran, an invocation or a speech. Of course, having quiet surroundings is also desirable, even required at times, but that is more relevant to the topic of seclusion (khalwah).]
- 29. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:113; Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 68:276-277, quoted from Qummī Ḥimyarī, Qurb al-isnād, p. 369, Ṣadūq, al-Khiṣāl, 1:158 and ʿUyūn-i akhbār al-Riḍā, 2:234, reported with slight variations from Bazanṭī, from Imām Riḍā (peace be upon him). The full narration as reported in al-Kāfī is:

Among the signs of discernment (figh) are tolerance, knowledge and silence. Truly silence is one of the gates of wisdom. Truly silence acquires love [of others, or God], and it is indeed a guide to every good.

- 30. Misbāhal-sharī'ah, section 27.
- 31. Maybe what is meant here is that one should be silent even within himself. He should not talk to himself or pay any attention to his own will and desire. In other words, one should completely abstain from talking to anyone other than the Truth.

The letter of the late Akhūnd Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī to Sayyid 'Alī Īrawānī

32. One of my teachers narrated for me that the late Ākhūnd Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī (may God be pleased with him) wrote the following advice when replying to a letter by the late Āqā Sayyid 'Alī Irawānī:

The following is what you should observe and keep: Reduce your food, speech and sleep;

Instead, engage in the remembrance of God For ineed His knowledge is vast and deep.

These guidelines of wayfaring have been captured concisely and beautifully in this poem [by Shāh Qāsim Anwār, d. 837/1434]:

The perfection of the imperfect lies in five: Eating and sleeping only to survive,

Solitude from the people, and talking not much, And constant remembrance, in order to thrive.

33. The full narration is:

There is nothing more harmful for the heart of a believer than excess eating. It brings about two things: the hardening of the heart, and the enticement of carnal desires. Hunger is a condiment for a believer and a food for the spirit. It is a source of nour-ishment for the heart and wellness for the body.

Ja'far Kashfi, *Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, p. 683. It is also reported with slight variations from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) in *Miṣbāḥ al-sharī'ah*, section 34.

Imām Şādiq's narration on solitude

34. These three quotes are all parts of a long narration by Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him), reported in Biḥār al-anwār, quoted from Miṣbāḥ al-sharī'āh. The differences of the Miṣbāḥ al-sharī'āh version are indicated below in round brackets:

صَاحِبُ الْمُزَلَةِ مُتَحَضِنُ بِحِضِ اللهِ (تَعَالَى) وَ مُحَثَّرِسُ بِحَرَاسَتِهِ، فَيَا طُوبَى لِنَ تَفَرَّدَ بِهِ سِراً وَ عَلَانِيَةً؛ وَهُوَ يَحْتَاجُ إِلَى عَشَرَةِ خِصَالٍ: عِلْمِ الْحَقِّ وَ الْبَاطِلِ، وَتَحْبُبِ الْفَقْرِ، وَاخْتِنَارِ الشِّنَّقِ، وَ الزُّهْدِ، وَاغْتِنَامِ الْخَلُوةِ، وَالنَّظَرِ فِي الْعَوَاقِبِ، وَرُونَيَةِ التَّفْصِيرِ فِي الْمِبَادَةِ مَعَ بَدْلِ الْجَهُودِ، وَتَرْكِ الْعُجْبِ، وَكَثْرَةِ الذِّكْرِ بِلاَ غَفْلَةٍ فَإِنَّ الْمَفْلَة مِصْطَادُ الشَّيْطَانِ وَرَأْسُ كُلِّ بَلِيَةٍ وَسَبَّ كُلِ جَابٍ وَخَلْوَةِ الْبَيْتِ عَمَّالَا يَحْتَاجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي الْوَقْتِ.

One who observes solitude has taken refuge is in God's fortress (Exalted He is), and has gone under His guard. Therefore, blessed is the person who renders himself alone with Him [or renders himself alone by means of solitude] in private and public. Such a person would need ten qualities. He should:

- 1. know what is true and what is false;
- 2. have a love for poverty;
- 3. choose hardship with willingness;
- 4. have no interest in this world;
- take seclusion (khalwah) as a golden opportunity;
- ponder upon the end of affairs;
- view his acts of worship as insufficient even though he does his best;
- 8. abandon self-satisfaction;
- constantly remember God without heedlessness, because heedlessness is the trap of Satan, the head of every disaster, and the cause of every veil;

10. have his house empty of anything that is not needed at the time.

قَالَ عِينَى ابْنُ مَرْتُمْ (عليه السلام): اخْزُن (أَخْرِزُ) لِسَانَكَ لِعِمَارَةِ قَلْبِكَ، وَلَيْسَعْكَ بَيْتُكَ، وَ الْخَدْرِمِنَ الرِّيَاءِ (الزِيَّا) وَفُضُولِ مَعَائِكَ، (وَاسْتَمْ مِنْ رَيِّكَ) وَابْكِ عَلَى خَطِينَتِكَ، وَفِرَّ مِنَ النَّاسِ فِرَارَكَ مِنَ الأَسْدِ وَالأَفْعَى، فَإِنَّهُم كَانُوا دَوَاءً فَصَارُ والنَّيْوَمَ دَاءً، ثُمَّ الْقَ اللهَ مَتَى شِنْتَ. قَالَ النَّاسِ فِرَارَكَ مِنَ الأَسْدِ وَالأَفْعَى، فَإِنَّهُم كَانُوا دَوَاءً فَصَارُ والنَّيْوَمَ دَاءً، ثُمَّ الْقَ اللهَ مَتَى شِنْتَ. قَالَ رَبِيعُ بْنُ خُتْمَ: إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَكُونَ فِي مَوْضِعٍ لَا تَعْرِفُ وَلا تُعْرَفُ فَافْعَلَ.

Jesus son of Mary (peace be upon him) said, "Withhold (preserve) your tongue for the flourishing of your heart. You should fit in your house [i.e. stay at home]. Avoid showing off (avoid usury) and what is beyond your livelihood [i.e. beyond what you need to pass your life]. (Feel ashamed of your Lord and) weep for your sins. Run away from the people as you run away from lions and vipers, for indeed they used to be remedies but have now turned to maladies. Then meet God whenever you want [i.e. you would then be prepared to meet with your Lord]."

Rabī^c ibn Khuthaym said, "If you can go somewhere where you know no one and no one knows you, then do so."

وَفِى الْعَزَلَةِ صِتَانَةُ الْجُوَارِحِ، وَفَرَاغُ الْقَلْبِ، وَسَلَامَةُ الْعَيْشِ، وَكَسْرُسِلَاحِ الشَّيْطَانِ، وَالْجُمَانَيَةُ بِهِ مِنْ كُلِّ سُوءٍ، وَرَاحَةُ الْوَقْتِ (رَاحَةُ الْقَلْبِ). وَمَا مِنْ نَبِيٍّ وَلَا وَصِيٍّ إِلَّا وَاخْتَارَ الْعَزَلَةَ فِي زَمَانِهِ، إِنَّا فِي ابْتِدَانِهِ وَإِمَّا فِي انْبِهَانِهِ.

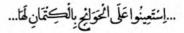
In solitude the limbs are preserved, the heart finds relief, life is safe and sound, the weapons of Satan are shattered, one is distanced from every evil, and one's time (one's heart) is filled with composure. There has been no prophet or prophet's successor who did not choose to live in solitude, either early in his life or toward the end.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 67:110, quoted from Miṣbāḥ al-sharīʿah, section 45. [tr: In this narration, solitude (ˈuzlah) is more comprehensive than seclusion (khalwah), because the latter is mentioned as one of the conditions and requirements of the former (the fifth condition). This could clarify what is meant by making oneself alone in private and public. Given the following parts of the narration, perhaps one can conclude that seclusion (khalwah) here means absolute loneliness and privacy, while solitude (ˈuzlah) means to keep an overall distance from the people and to avoid interacting with them as much as possible. The former is rather a temporary state, while the latter can be a more permanent station.]

- 35. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 72:82, quoted from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:225; Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, Wasāʾil al-Shīʿah 16:248, reported from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid al-Barqī.
- 36. See note 34 above.

Narrations concerning the concealment of secrets

37. There are two narrations in this regard, reported from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family):



...Seek help for your needs by concealing them...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 74:164, quoted from Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsāʾī, 'Awālī al-la ʾālī, 1:285.

Seek help for your affairs by concealment, because anyone who has a bounty is envied.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 74:151, quoted from Ibn Shubah al-Ḥarrānī, Tuḥaf al- ʿuq ūl, p. 48.

38. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 40:199-200, quoted from Mashhadī, al-Mazār al-kabīr, p. 149ff, reported with its chain of transmission. Maytham (may God be pleased with him) said, "One night, my master, the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him), took me out of the city with himself..." He then narrates a detailed account of what happened, the Imām's supplication, and his talking to the well. At the end, he narrates the above lines from the Imām.

Digging the earth by hand, hiding secrets in it, and the growth of plants out of it are apparently metaphorical expressions that were commonly used among the people. They denote the case of a person who has no intimate friends to divulge his secrets to, and thus has no choice but to entrust them to the earth.

Another possibility is that the Imām really wanted to hide his sacred secrets in the $malak\bar{u}t$ (spiritual reality and counterpart) of the earth. The growth of plants could then mean the emergence of certain saints and friends of God ($awliy\bar{a}$) that have been entrusted with those secrets. Those would be the intimate companions of the Imām.

39. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:220, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). The author (Baḥr al-ʿUlūm) had quoted the narration with "shame" (hayā) instead of "concealment" (khab', khibā').

- 40. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 72:83; Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, Wasāʾl al-Shīʿah, 16:249. Both sources have quoted from Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:226, reported with its chain of transmission from Khālid ibn Najīḥ, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).
- 41. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 72:69 and 72:71-72, quoted respectively from Ṣadūq, al-Khiṣāl, p. 1:44 and Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:221-222. Both sources have reported the narration with its chain of transmission from Abū Ḥamzah al-Thumālī, from Imām Sajjād (peace be upon him).

42. Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 72:72, quoted from Kulaynī, al-Kājī, 2: 222; al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, Wasāʾil al-Shīʿah, 16:252, quoted from Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:257. The narration is reported with its chain of transmission from Sulaymān ibn Khālid, from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

43. This is Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju^cfī, who is a trusted authority (thiqah) of hadith and was one of the intimate companions of Imāms Bāqir and Ṣādiq (peace be upon them). The above narration has been reported with slight variations as follows:

Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him) narrated seventy thousand traditions to me that I have never told anyone so far, and will never do so.

Then I told Imam Baqir (peace be upon him), "May I be sacrificed for you! By telling me these secrets of yours—which I shall not tell anyone—you have indeed placed an immensely heavy burden on my back. Sometimes they [these secrets] erupt and boil in my chest to the extent that I am almost driven insane!"

He said, "O Jābir, when that happens, go out to the desert, dig a hole, and lower your head therein. Then say, 'Muḥammad ibn 'Alī told me so and so.'"

Khū'ī, Mu ſam rijāl al-ḥadīth, 4:341, quoted from Ṭūsī, Ikhtiyār ma rifat al-rijāl, p. 194, reported from Jabrā'īl ibn Aḥmad, from Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, from Ismā'īl ibn Mihrān, from Abī Jamīlah al-Muſaḍḍal ibn Ṣāliḥ, from Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju'ſī.

44. See p. 89.

The necessity of being in the company of particular and general masters

45. At any given point in time, there could be several saints and friends of God (awliya) who have achieved human perfection. If so, then each of them would be capable of guiding, instructing and assisting the wayfarers of the spiritual path. However, there is only one Imam at a time, who would be the vicegerent of the Messenger of God, the possessor of the Greatest Guardianship (al-wilayat al-kubra), the upholder of both the shariah and the tariqah (the exoteric and the spiritual paths), one who predominates over all planes of existence, and one who encompasses every affair in the contingent world, particular and universal alike. All of the saints are under his guidance and follow his shariah and tarigah. It is necessary for a wayfarer to be constantly attentive of him, and this is what the author means by companionship (muräfaqah). Muräfaqah is derived from rifaqah (company) and rafiq (companion), but it is not limited to physical company and presence. Instead, what matters in the spiritual journey is spiritual companionship. Just as the spirit of a saint or master encompasses the wayfarer, the wayfarer should also be continuously heedful of his master [and see himself under his master's guardianship] so that companionship may hold [because companionship is something mutual]. This companionship of the wayfarer with the Imam is the main driving force that advances the wayfarer on his journey. The late author has referred to the Imam as the particular master, which, at the time of the Greater Occultation (al-ghaybat al-kubrá), is only Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-'Askarī, who is the Imam of the Time and the Final Proof of God (may the Supreme God hasten his reappearance).

As with the other saints and masters, they follow the particular master and conform to him in their instruction and guidance of wayfarers. Moreover, their instruction is needed only when there is no access to the particular master. But at times when one can access the particular master, it is not required for him to refer to a general master, although it is permissible and there is no problem with it.

The companionship of the general master is also a necessary condition of the journey. That is because the breaths of divine mercy reach the wayfarer from the All-Mighty Lord through the heart of the general master, who in turn receives them from the particular master, who is the Nearest Veil (al-hijāb al-aqrab, to God). Thus, a wayfarer should not be heedless of the spiritual diffusions of the general master, for then he would be deprived of these benefits.

Then there is the case of certain saints who have achieved certain spiritual stations without the intermediation of the Imām (the particular master) and without conforming to his shariah in their journey. If there has been no negligence or shortcoming on their part, meaning that they

have not deliberately denied or rejected the Imam, then they would be among those who are excused because of not having any means of guidance (sing. mustad'af). Their case and status will be up to God to decide. If God's grace reaches them and the true spiritual guardianship of the Imam manifests to them, they will certainly realize the fact of the matter and embrace his shariah. Of course, in certain cases it might not be possible for them to openly declare this due to the unsuitability of the society and the environment in which they live. As a result, they would have no choice but to practice tagiyyah and tawriyah (doublespeak, dissimulation, concealing one's belief and declaring it in a way that would be interpreted otherwise). Nevertheless, regardless of what one declares outwardly, one cannot reach the station of divine gnosis unless he comes to the inward and spiritual realization of the Imam's guardianship. Without this guardianship, the person will be halted at the station where he is, and would not be able to advance to the station of divine gnosis and union, even though he claims that he has reached that station.

As with those who deliberately decline and reject the Imām's guardianship, then it would be impossible for them to advance on the spiritual path and reach perfection, because this path is based on sincerity, which is at odds with deliberate denial and rejection.

46. See pp. 57ff.

Types of unveiling(mukāshafah)

47. There are several types of unveiling (mukāshafah):

 Material and corporeal unveilings, which involve the discovery of certain realities of the world of nature that were hidden from the person before. The realities that one discovers [i.e. realizes in his soul] concerning the natural sciences, mathematics and astronomy would be examples of this type of unveiling.

2. Visions of the heart (al-mushānadāt al-qalbiyyah), which are the unveilings that a wayfarer experiences after he passes the realm of nature and enters the realm of forms (mithāl). An example of this is when some reality appears to the person in its imaginal form. These visions occur while one is awake, and are very similar to the dreams

that one sees is sleep.

3. Spiritual visions (al-mushāhadāt al-rūliyyah), which are the unveilings that a wayfarer experiences after he passes the realm of forms and enters the realm of spirits and immaterial intellects (jabarūt). These unveilings depend on the strength of one's spirit, and the extent of its breadth and authority in the universe. Having dominance over the thoughts and minds of others, teleporting on land or through the

- air, walking on fire, foretelling the future, causing health or illness in others, and influencing the thoughts and opinions of others are the results of the control and authority of one's spirit.
- 4. Secret unveilings (al-mukāshafāt al-sirriyyah), which are the unveilings that occur for a wayfarer in the realm of sincerity or the realm of Divine Names (lāhūt), which comes after passing the realm of spirits and immaterial intellects. They are called secret unveilings because they involve uncovering the secrets of the world, discovering universal realities, and unveiling the Universal Names and Attributes of God.
- 5. Unveilings of the Essence (al-mukāshafāt al-dhātiyyah), which are the unveilings that a wayfarer experiences after he achieves perfection by passing the realm of sincerity and reaching the station of absolute unity (tawhād) and subsistence by God (al-baqā²bi-Allāh). Some examples of this type of unveilings are realizing the reality of being and its properties, the process by which the divine command descends to the contingent world, the origin of the divine decree and determination (qaḍā²wa qadar), the divine will (mashī²ah), the source of revelation and legislation (tashrī²), how what is originated (ḥādith) came to existence and how it is connected to the divine realms, and the realities of unification (ittiḥād), unity (waḥdah) and multiplicity (kathrah). It also involves having dominance over all inferior realms of existence.

Based on the above, spiritual unveilings occur before one enters the realm of unity and divinity. Therefore, they are possible for both believers and disbelievers, and by no means do they prove or disprove the perfection of the person who experiences them.

Types of manifestation (tajalli)

48. There are four types of tajalli (manifestation, theophany):

- Manifestation of the Divine Actions (al-tajalliyyāt al-fi liyyah), which
 is when the wayfarer does not see his acts as his own, but as the actions of another Being. It also applies to when the actions of other beings are seen as not their own actions, but as actions arising from another Being. This is when one realizes that every speech, movement,
 stillness, coming and going by anyone hinges upon a single Being
 alone.
- 2. Manifestation of the Divine Attributes (al-tajalliyyāt al-sifātiyyah), which is when the wayfarer does not see his attributes belonging to himself. Instead, he has an overall sense that they belong to another Being. For example, when he sees something, he does not find himself as the observer, but he feels that the real observer is another Be-

ing; and so is the case with the other attributes. The same is true about the attributes of other people, including knowledge, power, hearing, vision and life: The wayfarer comes to the realization that they all belong to another Being.

- 3. Manifestation of the Divine Names (al-tajalliyyāt al-asmā'iyyah), which is when the wayfarer realizes an attribute together with the Essence that is the source of that attribute. This is the realization of a Divine Name. [tr: When taken by itself, a quality of God is referred to as an Attribute (sifah), but when taken in its relation to, and as a property of God's Essence (the noun), it is referred to as a Name (ism).] For example, when he hears something, he finds another Essence that is the Hearer. Likewise, he realizes the Essence that is the true possessor of life, knowledge, sight and power (the All-Living, the All-Knowing, the All-Seeing and the All-Powerful). Similarly, he finds that there is no name that belongs to any other person or being; rather, they are all the names of God.
- 4. Manifestation of the Divine Essence (tajalliyyāt al-dhāt), which is when the wayfarer finds his actual existence—as well as the existence of all other beings—belonging to the Sacred Essence of God. The term, "al-tajalliyyāt al-dhātiyyah" sometimes refers to this type of manifestation and sometimes to the third type. [tr: This is the manifestation of God's Essence, unconditioned by any Name or Attribute. It occurs when the wayfarer is in a state of annihilation. Thus, he will recognize it only after that state has elapsed.]

In the text, what the late author means is that experiencing the manifestations of the Divine Attributes does not prove that the person has reached the destination of the journey. Instead, the attainment of the destination hinges upon experiencing the manifestations of the Divine Essence—and specifically the divine type of such manifestations is what matters, not the spiritual type.

I have not seen the classification of the manifestations of God's Essence into divine (rabbāniyyah) and spiritual (rūḥāniyyah) in any other books of mysticism. Apparently the author is the only one who has made this distinction, and what is meant by it is not clear. Perhaps the divine manifestations of the Essence are the manifestations of the Divine Names that relate to the realm of Essence and Divinity—Names such as the All-Living (al-Ḥayy), the All-Knowing (al-ʿAlīm), the All-Powerful (al-Qadīr), the All-Hearing (al-Samīr) and the All-Seeing (al-Baṣīr). Then, the spiritual manifestations of the Essence would be the manifestations of the Divine Names that relate to the realm of Actions—Names such as the Creator (al-Khāliq) and the Sustainer (al-Rāziq). Another possibility is that the divine manifestations of the Essence occur when the wayfarer becomes a manifestation of a Name due to his annihilation in that

Name. Thus, that Name manifests in the wayfarer, and the wayfarer finds himself annihilated in that manifestation. The spiritual manifestations of the Essence would then be when there is only an unveiling of a Name for the spirit of the wayfarer without his annihilation in that Name. However, the technical expression for this is not a manifestation (tajalli), but an unveiling or vision. God knows best.

49. See p. 96.

50. The following explanation was found on the margin of the book:

A meaningless litany (qālabī) is when the person is only engaged in the term, without any attention to the meaning, as opposed to a meaningful invocation (nafsī).

An unspecified (*iṭlāqi*) litany is one that has no specified number, as opposed to a specified one (*haṣrī*).

My teacher and master, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, added the following points to clarify this:

What is meant by a meaningless litany is to utter a litany only by the tongue and without considering what it means. A meaningful litany, however, is to utter a litany by the tongue and also pay attention to its meaning.

An unspecified litany is a litany that is not conditional on a specific number. Rather, the wayfarer recites it in accordance with his spiritual state, without counting it. A specified litany, however, is a litany that is conditional on a specific number [which should be counted and observed].

51. See p. 90.

The meaning of ghayrah

52. [tr: Ghayrah or ghīrah (Persian ghayrat) means intolerance toward outsiders and intruders. It involves elements of protectiveness and possessiveness. Hence, ghayrah can be translated as "jealousy," and ghayūr as "jealous," in the accurate technical sense of jealousy, which is different from envy (hasad):

Jealousy is a protective reaction to a perceived threat to a valued relationship or to its quality...

Whereas jealousy is rooted in the desire to hold on to what one has, envy begins with the wish for something desirable that one does not have...

Envy is hostility toward superiors, a negative feeling toward someone who is better off... Envy is *not* the wish for the object or advantage that provoked the envy. Rather, envy is the much darker wish that the superior would lose the object or advantage. Envy is the perverse pleasure, the malicious joy (*Schadenfreude*) that is felt when the superior fails or suffers.

Clanton, "Jealousy and Envy," pp. 411-412. Ghayrah has been explicitly translated as "protective jealousy" in this work in order to avoid its confusion with the common notion of jealousy.]

- 53. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:496.
- 54. Once the house of mind is tidied up by the removal of incoming thoughts, it should be furnished, adorned and perfumed before the advent of the guest of *dhikr*. Maybe what the late author means by this is that one should pay attention to the spiritual station of the particular master. This would assist and facilitate *dhikr*.
- 55. These two lines are by Qays ibn al-Maluwwaḥ al-ʿĀmirī, known as Majnūn, the lover of Laylá bint Saʿd al-ʿĀmiriyyah. The full poem consists of four lines as follows:

I desired to glance at my beloved Layla From far away, to put down my heat.

"Die in that hope," said the women of her village,
"Laylá is not for these eyes to meet.

"These eyes have looked at other than her; "Wash them with tears, for they're not neat.

"And how can you enjoy hearing her speech?
"With the voice of others your ears are replete."

Majnūn, Dīwān Majnūn Layld, p. 109. They are also reported with slight variations in Narāqī, al-Khazāʾn, p. 174. [tr: This poem is also attributed—more widely, sometimes with slight variations, and sometimes with additional lines—to Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah. See Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-a ʿyān, 4:354-355.]

Control of incoming thoughts based on the method of the late author vs. the method of the late Akhund Mulla Husayn-Quli Hamadani and the late Qadi

56. There are two famous ways to purge the mind from incoming thoughts:

The first way is what the late author has mentioned. In this method, one should first direct his entire attention to some object like a piece of rock or wood, or a carving of a Name of God. This is to strengthen the mind in order to ward off incoming thoughts. One should imagine himself as the guard of his heart, driving away any thoughts that are about to enter. Once the wayfarer has gained strength in this way, he would engage in invocation and concentration.

The second way is what the late author has rejected and ascribed to the pretenders of spirituality. In this method, incoming thoughts are repelled by means of *dhikr* (invocation, remembrance of God, being present). That is, the person should prevent the entry of any thoughts into his mind by invoking God and directing his attention to Him or one of His Names. When the mind is already occupied with God's remembrance, there will be no room for other thoughts. Hence, the elimination of incoming thoughts is an inevitable consequence of remembrance, and since a wayfarer is always in a state of remembrance and presence, his mind would be free from incoming thoughts.

The latter method is the way of the late Ākhūnd Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Ḥamadānī and his disciples, down to the late Qāḍī (may God be pleased with them all). A few arguments can be presented in support of this method:

- 1. Based on the first method, the control of incoming thoughts cannot be achieved right away and off-hand. It requires a preparatory step of directing one's attention to an object like a piece of rock or wood as a means to drive away the incoming thoughts. This preliminary act is of course intended to purge the mind and set the grounds for divine manifestations. Nonetheless, should the person die when he is engaged in this practice, he dies while he is inattentive of God. Even if he dies in the state of eliminating the incoming thoughts, he would still not be heedful of God, because in this method [of the author], the elimination of thoughts is done before one engages in dhikr.
- 2. The religious way and the Islamic tradition favor the second method. The leaders and guardians of religion have always ordered the people to remember God. They have not allowed anyone to turn away from *dhikr*. They have held remembrance as the essence of worship in every step of the spiritual journey, whether the person is in the initial stages of worship or is an advanced worshipper. The manifestations of the Divine Attributes and Essence are achieved when one is in a state of *dhikr*. What the late author has mentioned in terms of the

wayfarer being hit by the Beloved in case of his diversion is a general rule that applies to everyone and every condition, not something specific to this method of *dhikr*. That is, the same risk is to be found in the first method: If the wayfarer engages in *dhikr* after eliminating incoming thoughts and then he is distracted again by some incoming thought, he will be penalized by the Beloved who is *ghayūr* (protectively jealous; see note 52 above). Therefore, a wayfarer may engage in invocation directly and without going through the preliminary steps of the first method, and he will be safe from every danger as long as he concentrates his attention and does not lose heed of the One who is being invoked. In short, the danger of the Beloved's *ghayrah* and the means to safeguard against it apply equally to both methods.

3. There is a verse in the Holy Quran which explicitly establishes that one should deflect the incoming Satanic thoughts by means of *dhikr*:

Truly those who are self-restrained, when a circumambulating group [or insinuation] of Satan troubleth them, remember, and thereby they perceive. (7:201)

One should know that any thought that comes to the mind is Satanic except for God's *dhikr* and the thoughts related to Him. These Satanic thoughts should be repelled by the weapon or sword of *dhikr*. The above verse (7:201) is the best proof and evidence for our claim that incoming thoughts should be driven away by means of *dhikr*. That is to ward off devils by God's light, and to avoid sins by His might.

O God! If it were not for Thy Mercy, which first came to me with a gracious assistance, who would have made me journey toward Thee in this clear path?

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 84:340 (a part of Imām ʿAlī's supplication in the mornings, known as Du ʿāʾ al-Ṣabāḥ).

4. The absolute and total removal of thoughts occurs only when one has passed every degree of determined and delimited dhikr. It is only then that the person can maintain his mind without any thought or remembrance. Such a mind is heedful and attentive of God, and its remembrance is without any determination. That is a type of dhikr which has not been determined or delimited by any aspect or condition of the Divine Names and Attributes. Hence, in terms of hierar-

chy, dhikr precedes this stage of the absolute control of incoming thoughts.

There are more arguments against the method of the late author, but this is not the place for a more elaborate discussion.

- 57. What is meant by these figures is to carve a piece of wood or rock in the shape of a Name of God, such as *Allāh*, 'Ālim (All-Knowing) or *Raḥmān* (All-Merciful). It should be three-dimensional and tangible.
- 58. The late author has adopted this method of focusing on a tangible object from Jāmī, who has attributed it to a group of Sufis that are associated with Ibrāhīm ibn Adham. 'Abd al-Rāḥmān Jāmī, Sharḥ-i rubāʿſyyāt, pp. 64-65.
- 59. It means that there is no specific number for these two litanies. Instead, the person should determine how many to say according to his spiritual state, and must choose a time that best suits him.

	ب	5	د	٥	و	ز	ح	ط	ي
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
,	b	j	d	h	าบ	z	þ	f	1/
<u>.</u>	J	٢	ن	س	ع	ن	ص	ق	ر
20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	200
k	1	m	n	s	c	f	s	9	r
ش	ت	ث	خ	ذ	ض	ظ	غ	1	
300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1	
sh	t	th	kh	dh	d	Z	gh	ā	

The abjad numbers

60. Each of the twenty-eight letters of the Arabic alphabet corresponds to a number called its *abjad* number. The order of the letters and their corresponding numbers are as follows: *abjad*, *hawwaz*, *huṭṭiyy*, *kaliman*, *sa faṣ*, *qarishat*, *thakhkhidh*, *dazigh*, *lā*.

Hamzah and alif [the first and last letters in the table above] are both number one.

If a letter has a stress (*shaddah*, *tashdīd*), it counts only once. For example, the word 'Aliyy (i.e. 'Alī) is numbered 110, because 'is 70, l is 30 and y is 10. They add up to 110 because y counts only once.

The word $Qudd\bar{u}s$ is numbered 170 since q is 100, d is 4, w (\bar{u}) is 6 and s is 60. Letter d is pronounced with a stress, but it counts only once because it is written only once, and *abjad* calculations follow the writing [it is written only once in Arabic, although the transliteration is otherwise].

The word $Fa^{c}\bar{a}l$ is numbered 181, because f is 80, f is 70, f is 1 and f is 30.

One exception is *Allāh*, the Majestic Name. In this word, the middle \bar{a} (alif) is not counted, but letter l, which is stressed, is counted twice. Therefore, the abjad number of *Allāh* is 66, because a is 1, l is 30 (and it counts twice), and h is 5. That is why in writing, *Allāh* is not written [should not be written] with a stress (shaddah). Instead, the l ($l\bar{a}m$) is written twice. It is for the same reason that the middle \bar{a} (alif) is not written, because it is not included in the abjad calculation of the word. So the word is written with two consecutive l's and without an \bar{a} , like *Allh*:

أنته

If it were not for the exception, the word would have been written as $A\underline{l}\bar{a}h$ (with a stress on l):

ik.

Since Arabic writing is based on *abjad* numbers, $A\underline{l}\bar{a}h$ should be written as Allh, without a stress. [tr: This is how it is conventionally written, except that it should not have a shaddah.] The fact that the stressed letters are written only once shows that they should count only once when retrieving the abjad number of a given word. For the same reason, the middle \bar{a} (alif) in the word $il\bar{a}h$ (god, one who is worshipped) is not included in the count, because the word is written without this letter, as ilh. Therefore, the abjad number corresponding to $il\bar{a}h$ is 36 (not 37). Similarly, the \bar{a} in $Rahm\bar{a}n$ is not counted, for in Arabic it is written as Rahmn, without the \bar{a} (alif). Accordingly, its number is 298.

One should also know that there are two methods of numbering any word: *mujmal* (undifferentiated) and *mufassal* (differentiated).

In the *mujmal* method, the letters of a word count as they are *written* (as discussed above). For example, the word $Qudd\bar{u}s$ (Sacrosanct) has four letters: q, d, w and s, with numbers 100, 4, 6 and 60, respectively. The word Fa ' \bar{a} (All-Active, All-Doer) has four letters: f, ', \bar{a} and l, with numbers 80, 70, 1 and 30, respectively. And there are ten letters in the phrase, $Y\bar{a}$ Ahadu yā Ṣamad (O One, O Independent):

10	1	1	8	4	10	1	90	40	4
y	ā	,	h	d	у	ā	ş	m	d

Therefore, the *mujmal* numbers for these three are as follows: 170 for $Qudd\bar{u}s$, 181 for $Fa^{co}\bar{a}l$, and 169 for $Y\bar{a}$ Alndu $y\bar{a}$ Samad.

In the *mufaṣṣal* method, however, each letter counts as the name of that letter is pronounced. Thus, the *mufaṣṣal* number of a letter is the

sum total of the *abjad* numbers of all the letters that appear in the name of that letter. For example $Qudd\bar{u}s$ has four letters: q, d, w, and s:

Q is pronounced $q\overline{a}f$, so it should count as three letters: q (100), \overline{a} (1), and f (80). Thus, $q\overline{a}f$ alone will be 181.

D is pronounced $d\vec{a}$, therefore it should count as three letters: d(4), $\vec{a}(1)$, and l(30), for a total of 35 for $d\vec{a}$.

W is pronounced $w\bar{a}w$, thus it should count as three letters: w (6), \bar{a} (1), and w (6). They add up to 13.

And s is pronounced $s\bar{n}$, so its number will be the sum of three letters: s (60), y (10), and n (50), which add up to 120.

Hence, the *mufassal* number of the word $Qudd\bar{u}s$ is 349, while its *mu-jmal* number is 170.

Another example is the phrase, Yā Ahadu yā Samad:

Once we expand it, its letters are pronounced as follows: $y\bar{a}$, alif, alif, $h\bar{a}$, $d\bar{a}l$, $y\bar{a}$, alif, $s\bar{a}d$, $m\bar{m}$, $d\bar{a}l$. [tr: Letters like $y\bar{a}^2$ and $h\bar{a}^2$ have a hamzah at the end, but it is not included in abjad calculations since it has the same number as the preceding alif.] Therefore, each of these letters should be included in the count:

10		Ī	1	30	80	1	30	80	8	1	4	1	30
у		ā	2	1	f	,	1	f	h	ā	d	ā	l
10	1	1	30	80	90	1	4	40	10	40	4	1	30
у	ā	,	1	f	ş	ā	d	m	у	111	d	ā	1

Hence, the *mufaṣṣal* number of Yā Aļadu yā Ṣamad is 619, while its *mujmal* number is 169.

[tr: For more on abjad calculations see Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, Shining Sun, p. 294ff.]

The author's method for controlling incoming thoughts has been adopted from the Naqshbandī Order

- 61. The method offered by the late author for the control of incoming thoughts is exactly the same as the method practiced in the Naqshbandī Order. Most of the phrases and expressions used in the text are taken from 'Abd al-Rāḥmān Jāmī, Sharḥ-i rubāʿīyyāt, pp. 59-60. Jāmī was a Naqshbandī Sufi—a follower of the spiritual path of Khwājah Muḥammad Naqshband.
- 62. Perhaps what the late author means by "certain possible dangers" is if the person summons the image of the particular master instead of the general master. For a wayfarer at the beginning of the path, it is not recommended to summon the image of the particular master as a means of

repelling Satanic thoughts. Such an imagination is very strong and the wayfarer would not be able to bear it. The image might disturb and trouble him, he could end up perceiving the image independent [of God], and he might fall into polytheism and the worship of the image. However, imagining the face of the general master is more relevant and suitable for a beginner who is engaged in invocation, because it is the general master who has prescribed the invocation, and his image is not as strong as that of the particular master. Therefore, there is no danger of worshipping the image.

Kabīr, saghīr, wasīt and akbar numbers

63. When the experts of the science of numbers (a 'da'd) talk about the "great" abjad numbers (al-abjad al-kabir), they mean the selfsame abjad numbers that range from one to a thousand (as mentioned in note 60 above). Therefore, what is meant by the abjad numbers by default is called the "great" (kabir) number. Then, when the great abjad number of a letter is divided by nine, the remainder will be the "small" abjad number of that letter (al-abjad al-saghār). For example, letter y (yā') is number 10 according to al-abjad al-kabīr. When divided by nine, it gives a remainder of one, which would be the saghīr number of letter y. Likewise, letter n (nān) is number five, because when five times nine is deducted from fifty (which is the number of n in al-abjad al-kabīr), the remainder is five. Hence, letters f (tā'), z (zā') and s (sād) do not have a number at all, for they are whole multiples of nine, leaving no remainder.

There is also the "intermediate" abjad number (al-abjad al-wasīṭ), which is the remainder of a letter's number when it is divided by 12 (just like the procedure in al-abjad al-saghīr).

Finally, there is the "greater" abjad number (al-abjad al-akbar), which is the abjad number of a letter multiplied by ten. For example, the akbar number of letter $y(y\bar{a})$ is 100.

In the text, what is meant by mujmal and mufassal refer to al-abjad al-kabīr numbers that range from one to a thousand, either based on the mujmal method or the mufassal method. (The two methods were discussed in note 60 above.)

64. What is meant here is that the wayfarer would imagine the written form of some of the Names of God in his mind and focus only on those forms, without paying heed to their meanings.

The three states refer to the spiritual states that the wayfarer experiences as a result of the formulae of istightār (asking God for forgiveness), $Y\bar{a}Fa^{c}$ (O Active, O Doer) and $Y\bar{a}B\bar{a}sit$ (O Expander).

65. A meaningful verbal invocation (al-dhikr al-khayālī al-nafsī) is to utter an invocation with the tongue and also pay attention to its meaning.

- 66. [tr: That which is remembered and invoked is God, and that which is sought after is union with the Beloved, or any intermediate goals throughout the path.]
- 67. The *mabādī* (initial elements, preliminaries) of something not only precede that thing, but also cause and produce that thing.

Here, what the late author means by the initial elements and preliminaries of *dhikr* might be to imagine the face of the general master, and to journey through the name of the particular master and his reality. This attention to the particular master brings about remembrance. In fact, remembrance is nothing but this, because the object of desire—which is the object of remembrance and invocation—is hidden in the particular master, his name and his remembrance. The main purpose of journeying through him and his name after the control of incoming thoughts is to prepare the house of the mind for remembrance, and to adorn it for the advent of that which is being remembered.

Thus, a master must observe the appropriate order in the stages of *dhikr* by instructing a beginner to first complete the preliminaries of *dhikr* and then embark on *dhikr*. A wayfarer should also abide by the master's commands in terms of the order of his instructions, and be completely obedient in this regard so as to be safe from dangers.

- 68. A meaningless verbal invocation (al-dhikr al-khayālī al-qālabī) is to utter a word with the tongue, but without paying attention to its meaning.
- 69. *Ibāḥah* (libertinism) here means lack of concern for what one eats or drinks. *Ta 'tīl* (suspension) is a further step, where one feels no commitment to any of the laws of religion. In other words, it is a total lack of responsibility and obligation. *Idhā'ah* (divulgence) is to disclose and spread divine secrets among outsiders [i.e. those who are not the people of gnosis and spirituality, and do not have the capacity for these secrets].

The dangers of journeying without a perfect master

The dangers mentioned above by the late author are among the most severe dangers of spiritual wayfaring. That is why it is not permissible for one to engage in such invocations without the instruction and supervision of a spiritual master—who has reached perfection in both knowledge and practice.

Some have identified this as the cause of deviation of Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj in divulging and disclosing the divine secrets and esoteric material. He lacked the instruction and discipline of a perfect and proficient master who had himself reached the destination and could lead others to it. Ḥallāj embarked on the spiritual path on his own and thus he fell into such pitfalls. That is why [many of] the great figures of spiritual journeying and mysticism have rejected and disavowed him.

They have not considered him as a weighty figure in terms of divine gnosis. His case is like that of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsā²i, who attempted to learn philosophy and mysticism on his own. He considered himself as an expert on philosophy merely by reading philosophical books. Hence, he made many errors such as divesting God of His Names and Attributes, and believing in the joint principality of existence and quiddity. These views of his greatly diminished his position among informed scholars and insightful critics. His works were destined to oblivion as they were dismissed by the scholars.

The spiritual school of the late Akhund Mulla Ḥusayn-Ouli Hamadani

These dangers and deviations are not found in the spiritual school and among the students of the late Ākhūnd Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī (may God be pleased with him). Each one of his students was a bright star in the firmament of virtue and perfection, illuminating the path for those who were to come later on. Among his students were Sayyid Aḥmad Karbalāʾī, Shaykh Muḥammad Bihārī, Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Malikī Tabrīzī, and Sayyid Muḥammad Saʿīd Ḥabbūbī. Their spiritual and imaginal beings have emitted light and warmth over a great distance and continue to do so. How can their divine teachings and works—both in terms of knowledge or practice—ever die out or be secluded over time?

The late Qādī's statements concerning the significance of the spiritual master

That is why the late Mīrzā ʿAlī Qāḍī (may God be pleased with him) used to emphasize the role of the spiritual master. Here are three statements by him in this regard:

- The most important requirement for the spiritual path is to have a master that has knowledge and perception, who has left his ego and desires behind, and has achieved the gnosis of God. That would be a perfect man, who has completed not only the spiritual journey toward God, but also the other three spiritual journeys. The movements and interactions of this person would be all by God.
- 2. If one, who seeks the spiritual path and wants to journey toward God, spends half of his life searching and looking for a master of the path until he finds one, it is well worth it.

3. One who reaches the spiritual master has traveled half of the path.

May God's extensive mercy be upon them all. O God, elevate their ranks and join them with Muḥammad and his pure progeny. [tr: The first statement seems to be an elaborated paraphrase of the late Qāḍī's teachings, not verbatim.]

70. The danger of paying attention to those Names of God that inspire hope and love is that it could lead into negligence and carelessness concerning one's religious duties. The danger of paying attention to God's Names of grandeur—such as the Magnificent, the Great, the Vengeful, and the Severe in punishment—is that it could strengthen one's sense of ego and Pharaohship, or could lead one to excessive fear and despair of God's mercy, and in turn result in the dismissal of religious injunctions. All of these are serious hazards.

Thus, the spiritual master has to guide the wayfarer in such a way that the impact of a certain Name does not overcome the impact of another. Should persistent invocation of some Name lead into such imbalance, the wayfarer must be instructed to engage in another Name that would offset that.

- 71. As mentioned later on, the great invocation (al-dhikr al-kabīr) is lā ilāha illā Allāh ("There is no god but God"); the greater invocation (al-dhikr al-akbar) is Allāh; and the greatest invocation (al-dhikr al-a ala lāha illāhā lū ("There is no god but Him").
- 72. Lesser invocations (al-adhkār al-ṣaghīrah) are God's Names such as al-Ḥayy (the All-Living) [or Yā Ḥayy. O All-Living; or simply Ḥayy], Yā Nūr (O Light), Yā Quddūs (O Sacrosanct), Muḥīṭ[un] (All-Encompassing) and 'Alīn[un] (All-Knowing). They are called "lesser" as they contrast the great, the greater, and the greatest invocations.
- 73. [tr: The types of invocation have been translated according to the definitions provided, not according to the literal meanings of their names.]

'Allāmah Țabāṭabā'ī's glosses concerning the categories of invocation

74. Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā has explained the categories of invocation as follows:

Based on what follows in the text, it can be inferred that an affirmative (*ithbātī*) invocation is one in which the person is claiming and affirming the meaning of the invocation. In contrast, a subsistent (*thabtī*) invocation is one that declares the subsistence and realization of the intended meaning externally and existentially [not mentally]. The stage in which one affirms an invocation precedes the stage in which he realizes its subsistence. Affirma-

tion is more relevant to the initial spiritual states of a wayfarer, in which he is closer to multiplicity and farther away from unity.

A unified (jant 7) invocation is one in which the person concentrates on his heart, while a dispersed (bast) invocation is one in which the person's attention is directed outwardly. That is, he disperses the invocation outside his heart, as mentioned later on (p. 95). God knows best.

The above was written in 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī's hand-writing on the margin of the treatise. When I asked him if it was indeed his gloss he said, "Yes, and I got it from Ṭarāʾq."

[tr: See Ma'sūm-'Alī Shāh, Tarā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq, 1:470.]

Categories of invocation according to the mystics

75. The late Narāqī says:

Some mystics have classified invocations into seven stages, as it relates to the body ($q\bar{a}lab$), the soul (nafs), the heart (qalb), the secret (sirr), the spirit ($r\bar{u}h$), the being ($fuy\bar{u}n$), and the most hidden ($ghayb\ al-ghuy\bar{u}b$).

The exposition of these seven stages is as follows:

- 1. Outward or physical invocation (qālabi) is a wayfarer's verbal invocation when he is at the beginning of the path. This is where the invocation and remembrance of God has not yet penetrated his heart. It is the stage where the spiritual journey of the wayfarer is through sensible particulars.
- 2. Repeating and persisting with an invocation will eventually transform and rectify the moral vices of the person, such that he will feel the impact of that invocation upon his soul. Then he finds pleasure in realizing and comprehending the meaning of his invocation. This stage of invocation is called the invocation of the soul (nafsi).
- 3. This continues until the wayfarer reaches the limits of the corporeal world and attains a certain level of purity of the soul due to further transformation of his moral vices. As the darkness and dust of human attributes subside in him, the sweetness of invocation takes him over, and yearning for the Invoked One overcomes him. Thus, he will invoke God with his heart and without using his tongue. Sometimes he may hear the sound of his heart's invocation as the sound of a pigeon or dove. This stage is called the invocation of the heart (qalbi).
- 4. Thence, the wayfarer begins journeying in the celestial spheres (aflāk). As the purity of his heart intensifies, the light of his heart's

invocation pervades through him, and his inmost consciousness (sirr) is more or less relinquished from paying attention to anything other than the Invoked One. This is called the invocation of the secret or the inmost consciousness. The heart's invocation at this stage is sometimes heard as the sound of a bead that is rolled in a tub. This stage will take the wayfarer to the middle of the celestial spheres.

- 5. When the wayfarer's inmost consciousness is completely purified of corrupt ideas and erroneous beliefs, and he has absolutely no attention to anyone other than the Invoked One, he will go beyond the highest degree of the celestial realms and enter the realm of immaterial intellects (jabarūt). Thus, the properties of spirit (rūh) apply to him [i.e. the properties of total immateriality]. This is called non-verbal invocation (khafiyy) [or the invocation of the spirit]. The person's complete attention at this stage may be heard as a buzzing sound like that of a fly that is trapped in a silk web.
- 6. The last stage is when the metaphorical degrees of the wayfarer's existence fully fade away and dissolve in the attractions of the Light of all lights. Hence, the person achieves the station of annihilation from himself and from everything other than God, and reaches the realm of Divinity (lähūt) in his journey. At this stage, the invoker and the invocation have no existence vis-à-vis the Divine manifestations. The person invokes the invocations unconsciously; nothing of his self and ego remain except a name; and the invoker and the invocation are reduced to mere illusions and fantasies. This is the most hidden invocation (ghayb al-ghuyūb).

Narāqī, al-Khazāʾin, p. 407-408. [tr: Narāqī has not discussed the invocation of being (al-dhikr al- uyūnī).]

76. A unified invocation is when one concentrates on an invocation in his heart, while a dispersed invocation is when the invocation is transmitted and dispersed beyond the heart. That is, dispersed invocation is to observe God's unity (tawhid) in its manifestations other than the heart. Thus, unified invocation precedes dispersed invocation, because the Beloved's ghayrah only applies to the heart in the former type of invocation, while it applies to the heart and beyond the heart in the latter.

The difference between dhikr and wird

77. In mystical terminology, wird (litany) is not the same as dhikr (invocation, remembrance of God, recollection). Wird is a term that is verbally uttered by the tongue, but dhikr is to pay heed to the meaning of the term, either with or without passing it through the heart.

The root meaning of *dhikr* is to remember and recall. The reason why verbal litanies and terms are also called *dhikr* is that a term is a means to remember the meaning, and sometimes the means is referred to by the name of the end that it serves. This is an example of such a reference and usage: *Dhikr* is the end, and *wird* is the means to that end. It is on this account that the late author has used *dhikr* to refer to the verbal litanies. Wherever there is a mention of *dhikr* in the text, it means verbal litanies—which have their own types and classifications.

As the author mentioned above, the people of spiritual journeying have no regard for meaningless litanies, but that is once they have accomplished a certain degree of perfection. At the beginning of the journey, however, meaningless litanies are among the necessary litanies for a wayfarer, and they compose the first four stages of *dhikr* that one should undertake.

Meaningless non-verbal invocations are stronger and higher than all other types of meaningless verbal invocations. But even that is not needed once the wayfarer completes the eight stages of verbal invocation, as well as the stage of meaningful non-verbal invocation. In other words, once the person goes beyond the initial stages of *dhikr*, there is no need for meaningless invocations anymore.

Once the wayfarer goes beyond these nine stages and also completes the stage of essential invocation, he would enter the stages of the great, the greater, and the greatest invocation. These types of invocation are all to be done non-verbally; their verbal utterance has absolutely no significance, as discussed under essential invocation [which is another type of invocation not listed here. See p. 91].

78. Here we define and describe the types of invocation once again for further clarification:

A meaningless invocation (qaabi) is an invocation that is uttered either with the tongue or the heart, but without paying attention to its meaning.

A meaningful invocation (nafsi) is an invocation in which the person also pays attention to the meaning.

Verbal invocations (*khayālī*) are invocations with the tongue, unlike non-verbal invocations (*khafiyy*), which are only uttered by the heart and not by the tongue.

In secret invocations (sirr), the person is fully attentive and heedful of the invocation in his heart, but not in the sense of reviewing it with his heart or making an effort to concentrate on it. For example, if the person passes the Name Alläh through his heart, it would be a non-verbal invocation. But if he is only attentive and heedful of this Name in his heart, it would be a secret invocation.

Finally essential invocation ($dh\bar{a}t\bar{t}$) is when the person is heedful of God, the All-Mighty, not through any particular Name, but disentan-

gled from every Name, Attribute, property, condition and determination.

79. The above has been taken from 'Abd al-Rāḥmān Jāmī, Sharḥ-i rubā ʿiyyāt, pp. 62-63, who has attributed this method to "certain gnostics."

The narration, "I saw my Lord luminous"

80. I did not find this narration with these words in any of the major Shia or Sunni sources of tradition. There is one narration where Abū Dharr says,

I asked the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family), "Have you seen your Lord?" He replied, "He is a Light [or there is a veil of light]; how can I see Him?"

Muslim, Ṣaḥāḥ Muslim, 1:111, reported with its chain of transmission from 'Abd-Allāh ibn Shaqīq, from Abū Dharr. It is also reported with slight variations in Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 5:157; Tirmidhī, Sunan al-Tirmidhī, 5:70-71. In another version of this narration, it is reported from 'Abd-Allāh ibn Shaqīq that he said:

I said to Abū Dharr, "Had I seen the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family), I would have surely asked him something." He said, "What would you have asked him about?"

I said, "I would have asked him, 'Have you seen your Lord?'" "I asked him that," Abū Dharr replied, "And he said, 'I saw a light."

Muslim, Ṣaḥāḥ Muslim, 1:111; Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 5:147, reported with its chain of transmission.

The Prophet's reply in the first narration has been recorded as a rhetorical question, but maybe the original narration was a proposition saying, "I see something luminous." [tr: The Prophet's answer would read as a rhetorical question if it consists of three words. However, it is possible that the space between the first two words has been mistakenly added in transcription. Thus, the original narration would consist of two words and that would read as a proposition.] This is especially possible since both narrations are from the same narrators (from 'Abd-Allāh ibn Shaqīq, from Abū Dharr). Therefore, the two narrations might have

originally been a single narration that the transmitters have reported in their own words and not verbatim, and that is how it has become two. God knows best.

[tr: Another possibility—which would have the same meaning as the editor's view—is that the Prophet's reply in the first narration could be maintained at three words but read with a different inflection:

نُورُأْنِي أَرَاهُ.

There is a light that I see.

This is exactly how it has been reported in Aḥmad's Musnad. Also see Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, Allāh shināsī, 1:107-108.]

"There is no god but God" is only a negation

81. In mystical nomenclature, the "invocation of negation and compound affirmation" refers to lā ilāha illā Allāh, "There is no god but God." It is called a negation and an affirmation because it consists of two statements: "There is no god," which is a negation (nafy), and "There is God," which is an affirmation (ithbāt). It is called a compound affirmation (al-ithbāt al-murakkab) because "Allah" denotes God's Essence as it incorporates all of His Names and Attributes. This is contrary to invocations that involve a negation and a simple affirmation (al-ithbāt al-basīṭ) such as "There is no god but Him" (lā ilāha illā hū) or "There is no he but Him" (lā huwa illā hū), where the pronoun "Him" (Huwa) refers to God's Simple Essence, without consideration of any Name or Attribute.

However, upon further reflection, it becomes evident that $l\bar{a}$ $il\bar{a}ha$ $ill\bar{a}$ $All\bar{a}h$ does not consist of two statements, one being a negation and the other being an affirmation. Instead, it is only a single negation.

If the exception Allāh is read as Allāha (i.e. manṣāb in terms of inflection), then the sentence would be composed of a negation and an affirmation, where the exception and the excepted clause would each be a statement on its own.

However, the exception Allah is read as Allahu (i.e. marfūcin terms of inflection), which means that it is connected to ilaha. Thus, the exception is not a separate or independent statement from the excepted clause. Rather, the whole sentence is a single negation, saying, "There is not 'any god other than God'" [where 'any god other than God' is to be taken as a single clause that is being negated, not as a composition of a negation and an affirmation]. In other words, it means that "Other than God there is no god." You must ponder upon this very well.

[tr: Lā ilāna illā Allān is a single negation, simply denying any god other than God—Who is already established and known inherently by our primordial human nature (fitrah), as the Quran rhetorically asks,

...أ في اللهِ شَكُّ...

... Is there any doubt concerning God?... (14:10).

However, in almost all Sufi practices of invocation, lā ilāna illā Allān is treated as a dichotomous phrase, consisting of a negation of other-than-God, and an affirmation of God. Invoking this statement as such might be a means of emphasizing God's unity—as it would re-establish God after the negation of every god other than Him. One could also say that the affirmation after the exception is not to establish God's existence, but to establish His unity.]

82. [tr: One could read the original text here in another way: "Yā Hū (O He) is called the simple invocation," which would be defining simple invocation (al-dhikr al-basīṭ). However, based on the rest of the treatise, it becomes evident that what is meant here is to define the invocation of negation and simple affirmation as lā ilāha illā hū and lā huwa illā hū, which are the same as the greatest invocation (al-dhikr al-a 'zam).]

The late Naraqī's exposition on non-verbal invocations

83. The late Narāqī has elaborated on the methods of performing non-verbal (khafiyy) invocations—also called the invocation of the heart—as it applies to the formula of tawḥīd (i.e. lā ilāha illā Allā, the great invocation):

You should know that the great figures of spirituality have mentioned several ways for this formula:

1. The wayfarer would assume a circle positioned over the two sides of his body, where his navel and his throat would be the two ends of its diameter. Then he goes about invoking the splendid formula of lā ilāha illā Allāh by starting from the navel and bringing lā ilāha up to his throat, while passing it on both arcs on the two sides of his body. He should think of the two arcs as pertaining to the nafs (soul, ego), and therefore the negation involved in lā ilāha would correspond to his detachment from the desires and habits of the nafs.

The person would then invoke illā Allāh starting from the throat and through the left arc—which pertains to the heart (qalb)—down to the navel. One should hold his breath when doing this, and make the invocation with force and firmness such

that it moves the heart. The person's intention when he does *illā* Allāh should be to establish God's unity and confirm His Essence as the sole object of his desire.

Some wayfarers move their head and body according to the imagined shape of the circle when making this invocation. [tr: That is, they move their head and body counterclockwise: They raise their head and body from the right side as they invoke $l\bar{a}$ il $l\bar{a}ha$, and lower them back to the initial position as they invoke ill $l\bar{a}$ All $l\bar{a}ha$] Others only imagine the circling of the invocation. This method [of the circle] is the way of the Naqshbandī Sufis and is called the "looped" or "framed" method (lanaqvili or lanqvali).

- 2. The wayfarer would draw lā up along the diameter from his navel to his throat; then he would enter ilāha into his right side while intending the Invoked One; then he would draw illā again up along the diameter from his navel to his throat; and he would finally make Allāh enter into his heart from his left side. All this is to be done firmly and with the nafs under control. This is a non-verbal invocation and is called the "four-beat" method (Persian chahār darb).
- 3. The invocation is done through two cycles: First is the circle of negation, whereby \$l\bar{a}\$ is drawn up from the navel to the throat, covering the left arc of the circle, and \$il\bar{a}ha\$ goes back to the navel through the right half of the arc, thereby completing a circle. This circle is to be taken as the circle of contingence, so that \$l\bar{a}\$ il\bar{a}ha\$ would negate all contingent beings. Second is the cycle of affirmation, where \$ill\bar{a}\$ is drawn up from the navel to the throat through the right arc, and \$All\bar{a}h\$ returns back to the navel through the left arc, thereby completing the circle. One should intend the sense of affirmation when making this circle. Again, the person should make the invocation with force and firmness such that it moves the heart, and he should hold his breath while doing so. This method is called the "confluence of the two seas" (majma \$calbahrayn).

According to Shaykh Najm al-Dīn Rāzī in Mirṣād al-ʿībād, this invocation [majma al-baḥrayn] was taught by the Trustworthy Gabriel to the Master of the messengers, and he used to engage in it after the obligatory Morning Prayer. The Prophet in turn taught it to his intimate companion and heir, 'Alī al-Murtaḍá, and thus it was transmitted to his pure progeny. [See Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, Mirṣād al-ʿībād, p. 151.]

Some of the mystics have interpreted "Remember thy Lord within thyself" in the following verse as a reference to this type of

invocation [invocation of the heart, i.e. inward or non-verbal invocation]:

Remember thy Lord within thyself humbly, with awe, and without raising thy voice... (7:205)

Since "within thyself" already refers to inward or non-verbal invocation, dān al-jahr cannot refer to the same thing. Thus, instead of interpreting dāna as "without," they have interpreted it as "near," which is another meaning for the term. Therefore, dān al-jahr does not mean "Invoke and remember God in thyself," but it means "Invoke and remember God in a voice that is neither soft nor loud, but in between the two." It is a reference to soft verbal invocations [as opposed to "Remember thy Lord within thyself" which refers to non-verbal invocations].

Narāgī, Khazāin, p. 405-406.

The first method described by the late Narāqī is the same as the "tidal" method (jazr wa madd) in the text. Likewise, the second method is the "quadratic" method (tarabbu', murabba ?) mentioned above. Hence, the above explanation clarifies what the author means by "tidal," "quadratic" and "confluence of the two seas."

- 84. This condition means that the person would not utter the invocation by the tongue, but would only *imagine* its flow and emergence from the tongue and the heart. [tr: This interpretation of the editor is based on the assumption that the set of conditions given in the text are for *dhikr* (nonverbal remembrance) as opposed to *wird* (verbal litany).]
- 85. The quote is by Abū Saʿīd Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsá al-Kharrāz, who had terms of acquaintance and companionship with Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī, Sarī al-Saqaṭī and Bishr al-Ḥāfī. The full quotation as reported by Shaʿrānī is:

إِذَا أَرَادَاللهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ أَنْ يُوَالِيَ عَبْداً مِنْ عَبِيرِ فَتَعَ لَهُ بَابَ ذِكْرِهِ، فَإِذَا اسْتَلَذَّ بِالذِكْرِ فَتَعَ عَلَيْهِ بَابَ الْفُرْبِ، ثُمَّ رَفَعَهُ إِلَى مَجْلِسِ الأُنْسِ، ثُمَّ أَجْلَسَهُ عَلَى كُرُسِيِ التَّوْحِيدِ، ثُمَّ رَفَعَ عَنْهُ الْخُجْبَ، فَأَدْخَلَهُ دَارَ الْفُرْدَائِيَّةِ، وَكَشَفَ لَهُ عَنِ الْجُلَالِ وَالْمَظَمَةِ بَقِي بِلَا هُو. فَي نَفِيدٍ مَلَ الْجُلَالِ وَالْمَظَمَةِ بَقِي بِلَا هُو. فَي نَفْدِ مَا الْمُعَلِي اللهِ وَبَرِئَ مِن دَعَاوِي نَفْسِهِ.

When God, Mighty and Majestic is He, wills to be the guardian of one of His servants, He opens the gates of His remembrance (dhikr) to him. So when the servant finds pleasure in His remembrance, He opens the gate of His proximity (qurb) to him. Then, He elevates him to the assembly of intimacy (uns). Next, He seats

him on the chair of unity (tawhīd). Then He lifts up the veils from before him, thereby ushering him into the house of singularity (fardāniyyah) and unveiling [His] majesty and magnificence to him. When he encounters [God's] majesty and magnificence, he remains without himself. Thus, the servant becomes annihilated, falling into God's protection and being cleared from the claims of his nafs (soul, self, ego).

Shacrānī, al-Ţabaqāt al-kubrā, 1:92.

86. To conceive the master's name "as a *dhikr*" is to take it as a means to the Truth and a reflection of Him, not as an end in itself. The name of the particular master is the mirror of the Truth, and therefore it should be treated as a mirror. The same is true about the name of the general master, or any kind of imagination and conception for that reason.



Sometimes a friend reflects *the* Friend, So I see him with *His* eyes, and not as an end.

See Ibn al-cArabī, al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah, 1:305 (bāb 63).

87. That is to first conceive the title "messenger" (rasūl), and then conceive the title "successor" (khalīſah); or to first conceive the real name of the messenger, Muḥammad, and then conceive the real name of his successor, cAlī.

Likewise, what is meant by conceiving the name of the particular master and guardian is either to conceive one of his titles—such as "the director of God's command" (sāḥib al-amr), "the master of the time" (sāḥib al-zamān), "guardian" (walī)—or to conceive his real name, Muḥammad.

- 88. Verbal invocation can be either meaningless (qālabi) or meaningful (nafsī). Thus, what was mentioned for unified and dispersed invocations—that one should conceive the name of the particular master in his heart or toward the bottom of his chest—only pertains to meaningless verbal invocations, whether unified or dispersed. In these two stages of meaningless verbal invocation, one cannot observe the luminous apparitions and imaginal forms of the Messenger and the guardian at the same station as that of the Invoked One. However, in the stages of meaningful verbal invocation, as well as non-verbal, secret and essential invocations, one should observe and be attentive of the luminous apparitions and forms of the Messenger and the guardian at the station of the Invoked One at all times—whether he is actively engaged in invocation or not.
- 89. Thus, in terms of conception and imagination, there are two differences between the particular master and the general master: 1. The former is

to be conceived within the body, as opposed to the latter. 2. The attention and humility of the particular master are directed toward the Invoked One, while they are directed toward the invocation in the case of the general master.

- 90. As a matter of fact, this is exactly what the mystics have meant. One should indeed conceive the general and particular masters throughout invocation, from beginning to end. Of course, this is a difficult task to do, especially at the beginning of invocation, when one should focus his attention on unity and avoid any dispersion of thought. However, this initial contradiction and problem will gradually fade away as the invoker increases in strength. It will then be very easy for him to be engaged in invocation at the same time as he conceives and visualizes his master. This method—visualizing the masters throughout the process of invocation—is far more effective in the advancement of the wayfarer than the method offered by the late author—visualizing the two masters only at the beginning and the end of invocation, as well as upon daybreak and nightfall.
- 91. What is meant here is that before one actually takes up invocations, he may conceive and visualize his master as a meaningful verbal invocation, or as a form-based or meaningful non-verbal invocation. Therefore, one would pay attention to the name and figure of his particular or general master with or without paying attention to its inner meaning and reality. This non-verbal conception is beneficial, and will increase one's love and devotion.

[tr: This is a type of *dhikr* which is employed as a means of controlling the influx of incoming thoughts. It is intended to prepare the way-farer for embarking on invocations, and to increase the person's love and devotion, as mentioned above. See pp. 85ff.]

Knowing people by looking into their realities is only possible for perfect or nearly perfect individuals

92. What is meant here is that by paying attention to the Messenger and his successor and keeping up this practice, their luminous realities will manifest to the invoker. This is what the author mentioned before, that "Later on in the journey, the particular master will present and make himself known to the wayfarer" (p. 82 above).

Now, if an invoker reaches the station of purity (tahārah)—which involves the purging of his heart and interior from every impurity and achieving the utmost degree of thikr—then he would be able to pay attention to a person's reality and discern whether or not he is a general master, and whether or not he has the ability to guide others. When such an invoker looks into one's reality, the spiritual level of that person becomes patent to him.

However, an invoker who has not reached the station of purity and the utmost degree of *dhikr* would observe a person with an impure look. Then by persisting on this practice, the invoker will form an image of that person in his mind and will develop a bond and affection toward that person. Thus, he will start thinking and believing that this person is a perfect individual, when that might not be the case. The person may actually be an imposter, a devil, or a bandit on the path toward God.

It is also possible that such an impure invoker looks into one of the real friends of God ($awliy\bar{a}$) and pays attention to him, but finds him a false pretender and a wicked person, because of his impure heart. Therefore, the way of identifying the light of a person and whether he is indeed a general master or not is not possible except for those who have reached perfection or are very close to it.

- 93. [tr: What is mentioned here is the author's way of invocation in brief, and what is mentioned in Chapter 8 is a more elaborate description of it.
- 94. [tr: Saḥar refers to the last hours of the night just before dawn. It is the time in which it is recommended to observe night vigil and perform the supererogatory night prayer and other types of recommended worships. Sometimes it is defined as the final third of the night, which are truly precious hours, especially as it gets closer to dawn. And sometimes—loosely speaking—it refers to the time between dawn and sunrise.]
- 95. The late author has not determined the number of times that is recommended to recite these litanies. Perhaps one is to follow their great abjad numbers, whereby Muḥammadun Rasūl-u-llāh would be 254, Yā ʿAlī would be 121, and ʿAlī would be 110.

[tr: It could also be that these two litanies should also be recited a thousand times each after each of the obligatory Morning and Night Prayers, with the difference that $Y\bar{a}$ 'Alī is to be observed after the Morning Prayer, and 'Alī is to be observed after the Night Prayer. Or that they should be observed every day and night [according to their abjad numbers], with the difference that $Y\bar{a}$ 'Alī is to be recited during the daytime and 'Alī at night.]

Concerning dahr and secularism

96. Dayhūr and dayhār are exaggerated and emphasized forms of dahr, and dahr refers to God, as per this narration:

لَاتُّسْبُواالدَّهْرَفَانَّ اللهَ هُوَالدَّهْرُ.

Do not curse the time (dahr), for truly God is the time.

Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 7:45; Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 2:395, 491 and 499; Sabzawārī, Jāni ʿal-akhbār, p. 455; Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsā ʾī, ʿAwālī al-la ʾālī, 1:56.

[tr: Dahr is commonly used to mean "the time"—meaning the current time, the current state of affairs in the world. Its root meaning is the duration of the universe from beginning to end.

Some atheists used to say,

...There is nothing but our life of this world; we die and we live, and nothing destroys us but Time (dahr)... (45:24)

This is a fundamental element of secular cosmology, and these people are called $dahriyy\bar{u}n$, which is the most accurate translation for the proponents of secularism. Such materialists identify the unintelligent and inanimate forces of nature as the cause of anything that occurs. Therefore, what they mean by dahr is Mother Nature and her forces. Likewise, when a calamity befalls them, they curse nature for bringing it about. The noble narration above is an answer to this mentality, and essentially says: What you call time or nature is in fact God. You consider a set of unintelligent and inanimate forces to be the cause of events, while the universe is governed by will and wisdom. Anything that occurs has emanated from a source that has every perfection, and that is God.

This could be one interpretation for the idea that secularism is essentially "religion in disguise." It shows that in many cases, those who do not subscribe to a transcendent deity and a divine religion—including the followers of other religions, the agnostics, and even the overt deniers—subscribe to the same reality but in a different form. Sometimes they have the religious experience without having its theory as a formal belief system, and sometimes what they hold subconsciously would contradict what they openly express.



Everyone seeks the Beloved: The sober and the drunk.

Everyone serves His house: The priest and the monk.

Ḥāfiz, ghazal 80.]

The meaning of ehyeh asher ehyeh

97. Our teacher and master, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'i, narrated from the late Mīrzā 'Alī Qāḍī (may God be pleased with them) that "The correct pronunciation of this phrase is Ahyan Shar 'ahyan." 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī further added, "These are two Hebrew words meaning All-Affectionate and All-Munificent (Ḥannān and Mannān in Arabic)."

[tr: The late editor came up with a more accurate interpretation of this phrase later on (i.e. after writing the above annotation) based on Farhād Mīrzā's Zanbil, pp. 118-119. He reported his findings in one of his writings (unpublished), a summary of which is as follows:

إِهْيَهُ إِشْرَاهِيَهُ.

The correct writing and pronunciation of this phrase is *ihyah ishr ihyah*, as found in the Hebrew Torah. The phrase is one of the Names of God meaning "He was, He is, and He will be."

Maktūbāt-i khaṭṭī, Jung 13, pp. 140-141 (available at http://www.maarefslam.net), with reference to Murtaḍá al-Zabīdī, Tāj al- ʿar ūs min jawāhir al-Qāmūs, under sh-r-h.

This phrase is exactly found in the Old Testament where God introduces Himself:

And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? (Exodus 3:13)

And God said unto Moses,

אהיה אשר אהיה

I AM THAT I AM,

and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. (Exodus 3:14)

The closest Ouranic verse to this sentence would be:

إِنِّنِي أَنَا اللهُ لَا إِلَّهَ إِلَّا أَنَا...

Truly I am God, there is no god but I... (20:14)

God knows best. This sentence can be thought of as "the greatest name" of God in the Bible.

God cannot have a name. A name always denotes a thing, or a person, something finite. How can God have a name, if he is not a person, not a thing?

...When Moses tells him [God] that Hebrews wil not believe that God has sent him, unless he can tell them God's name (how could idol worshipers comprehend a nameless God, since the very essence of an idol is to have a name?), God makes a concession. He tells Moses that his name is "I am becoming that which I am becoming." "I-am-becoming is my name." The I-am-becoming means that God is not finite, not a person, not a "being." The most adequate translation of the sentence would be: tell them that "my name is nameless." The prohibition to make any image of God, to pronounce his name in vain, eventually to pronounce his name at all, aims at the same goal, that of freeing man from the idea that God isa father, that he is a person.

Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 58.]

98. Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:55, reported with a connected chain of transmission from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). It is also narrated from Imām ʿAlī (peace be upon him) that he said:

Awaken your heart by contemplation; distance your side from the night [i.e. from sleeping]; and be wary of your Lord God.

Ibid., 2:54. The same narration has been reported with a slight difference ("distance your side from sleep") in Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 23:327, quoted from Mufid, al-Amālī, p. 208. It is also narrated from Imām Riḍā (peace be upon him) that he said,

Worship is not to pray or fast a lot. Indeed worship is but to contemplate upon the affairs [i.e. the acts] of God, Mighty and Majestic He is.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:55, reported from Mu^cammar ibn Khallād.

99. For example, it is recommended to recite Chapter 97 (al-Qadr) one thousand times every night in the month of Ramaḍān. Likewise, it is recommended to recite Chapter 44 (al-Dukhān) a hundred times every night in this holy month. [Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 93:379, quoted from Ṣadūq, al-Annālī, p. 654, reported respectively from Imāms Ṣādiq and Bāqir (peace be upon them).]

Notes on Chapter Seven

 That is, a light in the form of a niche or chandelier appears at the time of performing certain acts such as prayer or litany. Such acts are needed in addition to the ongoing invocations—to set the ground for these forms of light.

Narrations concerning the types of hearts

2. The full narration of what is mentioned in the text is reported by Sa^cd [ibn Ṭarīf] as follows:

إِنَّ الْقُلُوبِ أَرْبَعَةُ: قَلْبُ فِيهِ نِفَاقُ وَإِيَانُ، وَقَلْبُ مَنْكُوسُ، وَقَلْبُ مَطْبُوعُ، وَقَلْبُ أَذْهُرُ الْفُلُوبِ أَرْبَعَهُ: مَا الْأَزْهَرُ وَقَلْبُ أَلْمُونُ فَقَلْبُ النَّافِقِ. وَأَمَّا الأَزْهَرُ فَقَلْبُ النَّافِقِ. وَأَمَّا الأَزْهَرُ فَقَلْبُ النَّفِيلِةِ، ثُمَّ قَرَأَ هَذِهِ الآيَةَ: النَّفِينِ، إِنْ أَعْطَاهُ شَكَرُ، وَإِنِ ابْتَلَاهُ صَبَرَ. وَأَمَّا النَّكُوسُ فَقَلْبُ النَّشُولِةِ، ثُمَّ قَرَأَ هَذِهِ الآيَةَ: (أَفَعَرْ بَهْنِي مَكِبًا عَلَى وَجِهِ أَهْدَى أَمَّن يَهْفِي سَوِيًا عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ). فَأَمَّا الْقَلْبُ الَّذِي فِيهِ (أَفَعَرْ بَهْنِي مَكِبًا عَلَى وَجِهِ أَهْدَى أَمْن يَهْشِي سَوِيًا عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ). فَأَمَّا الْقَلْبُ الَّذِي فِيهِ إِيمَانُ وَنِفَاقُ فَهُمْ قَوْمٌ كَانُوا بِالطَّانِفِ، فَإِن أَدْرَكَ أَحَدَهُمْ أَجَلُهُ عَلَى نِفَاقِهِ هَلَكَ، وَإِنْ أَدْرَكَهُ عَلَى إِيمَانُ وَنِفَاقُ فَهُمْ قَوْمٌ كَانُوا بِالطَّانِفِ، فَإِنْ أَدْرَكَ أَحَدَهُمْ أَجَلُهُ عَلَى نِفَاقِهِ هَلَكَ، وَإِنْ أَدْرَكَهُ عَلَى إِيمَانُونِهِ الْمَالِيْفِ. وَإِنْ أَدْرَكَ أَحَدَهُمْ أَجَلُهُ عَلَى نِفَاقِهِ هَلَكَ، وَإِنْ أَدْرَكُهُ عَلَى إِيمَانُونِهُ فَمْ قَوْمٌ كَانُوا بِالطَّانِفِ، فَإِنْ أَدْرَكَ أَحَدَهُمْ أَجَلُهُ عَلَى نِفَاقِهِ هَلَكَ، وَإِنْ أَدْرَكَ أَحَدَهُمْ أَجَلُهُ عَلَى الْمَافِقِ فَهُمْ قَوْمٌ كَانُوا بِالطَّانِفِ، فَإِنْ أَدْرَكَ أَحَدُهُمْ أَجَلُهُ عَلَى نِفَاقِهِ هَاللَّهُ مَا قَوْمُ كَانُوا بِالطَّافِفِ، وَالْمُ الْمُولِقُ الْمُؤْلِقِ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقِ الْمَالِقُولِهُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقِ الْمَقْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقِ الْمُؤْلِقِ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقِ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقِ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمِثْلُقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقِ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقِ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ الْمُؤْلِقُ

The Imām said, "Truly hearts are of four types: 1. There is a heart in which there is hypocrisy and faith. 2. There is a heart which is inverted. 3. There is a heart which has been sealed. 4. There is a heart which is luminous and purged."

I asked, "What do you mean by luminous?"

The Imām said, "It is as if there is a lamp in it. The sealed heart is the heart of a hypocrite, while the luminous heart is the heart of a believer: When He [God] gives to him, he shows gratitude, and when He puts him on a trial, he shows patience. The inverted heart is the heart of a polytheist."

Then the Imām continued by reciting this verse: "Is he who walketh prone on his face better guided, or he who walketh upright on a straight path?" (67:22). [Then he added,] "As with the heart in which there is hypocrisy and faith, that was the case of a group of people in Tā'if [a city southeast of Mecca]. If such a person is taken by his death while he is in a state of hypocrisy, he

perishes; if he is taken by his death while he is in a state of faith, he is saved."

Kulaynī, al-Kājī, 2:422-423, reported with a connected chain of transmission. The same narration is reported in Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 67:51-52, quoted from Ṣadūq, Ma ʿānī al-akhbār, p. 395. The only difference is that the narration in this source has "bright" (anwar) instead of "purged" (ajrad). There are a few more narrations in this regard:

There are three types of hearts: 1. An inverted heart that holds nothing of good, and that is the heart of a disbeliever. 2. A heart in which there is a black spot, meaning that good and evil combat one another in it. The one that is stronger [or the one that belongs to heart—being more compatible with it] would dominate [or overcome] the heart. 3. An expanded heart in which there is a shining lamp [or there are shining lamps]. This is the heart of a believer, and its light does not go out until the Day of Resurrection.

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 67:51, quoted from Ṣadūq, Ma anī al-akhbār, p. 395; Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:423, reported in both sources from Abū Ḥamzah al-Thumālī, from Imām Bāqir (peace be upon him). [tr: Ṣadūq's narration is quoted above as the main text, and the differences of Kulaynī's version are indicated in brackets.]

You might find an able and eloquent speaker who does not miss a single $l\bar{a}m$ or $w\bar{a}w$ [i.e. he does not mistake even one letter], but his heart is darker than a dark night. And you might find a person who is unable to express what is in his heart with his tongue, while his heart shines like the shining of a lamp.

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:422, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

The heart of a believer is purged, and there is a light in it that shines...

Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 67:59, quoted from al-Shahīd al-Thānī's Asrār al-ṣalān, p. 5, reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family).

3. This is a sermon by the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him), where he describes a wayfarer on the path of God, Glorified He is:

He has revived his intellect and killed his [base] soul, such that what was thick in him thinned [i.e. his body], and what was hard in him softened [i.e. his heart, or his temperament]. A very bright light has glittered for him, which has illuminated the way for him, and by which he has advanced on the path. The gates [of the path] have driven him to the gate of safety and the house of stability. His feet have become steady with the composure of his body in the abode of security and comfort. This is because he has employed his heart and pleased his Lord.

Nahj al-bal aghah, Sermon 220.

4. The late author has interpreted the verse as follows: As long as the blessed tree is not touched by heedlessness—which entails being contacted by Satan, who is created from fire—it will continue to receive light from inside the heart, which is neither eastern nor western.

However, this interpretation is not accurate because there is a wāw ("and") before law lam tamsashu nārun ("if no fire toucheth it"), and a wāw here means "even" or "though." So the meaning of the verse is: The oil will continue emitting light even if no fire touches it—for there is a light and glare in its essence.

5. Based on the late author's interpretation, the person is the niche (almishkāh), his heart is the glass (al-zujājah), and the enlightenment of his heart is due to his station of remembrance and seclusion. Then, "in houses that God hath allowed to be raised up" is the predicate of an omitted subject. So if we take the subject to be "the glass" [which is the heart], then "houses" would be the body of the person, because the enlightened heart is a resident of the body, and the enlightened heart is the imaginal world. [tr: That is, the imaginal world or the realm of forms is a reality that is hidden within the corporeal body.]

But if we take the subject to be "the niche" [the person], then "houses" would be the station of remembrance and seclusion—in which the person is situated. That is, this enlightened person is in the house of remembrance and seclusion.

It is also possible to take the subject to be "the glass" [the heart] and "houses" to be the aforementioned station of remembrance and seclusion. That would mean that the enlightened heart—which has a hidden inner light—is the selfsame station of remembrance and seclusion. If one ponders upon it, he would find this interpretation more appropriate than interpreting "houses" as the person's body.

6. That is, these men—who glorify God in these houses [of God's remembrance] every morning and evening—are the external instances and examples of this light.

Notes on Chapter Eight

 Arba In in arba In ("forty in forty") means to repeat a forty-day cycle for forty times. So the late author used to observe a specific invocation for forty days, and then he would extend it for another forty days, and so on for forty times.

It could also mean that he used to extend invocation in general to forty *arba fins*, not the specific invocation that he did in the first *arba fin*. Both methods of "forty in forty" are common among the travelers on the spiritual path.

2. It is not quite accurate that this verse mentions the Name al-Hayy (the All-Living) as a preparation and preliminary for sincerity. Instead, what brings about sincerity is to believe in God as the only possessor of life. The same is true about why all praise belongs to God: The mere Name al-Hayy does not establishes that praise only belongs to God [instead, what establishes this is the assertion that He is the only possessor of life]. Since life only belongs to God, any instance of beauty in any being belongs to Him alone. That is why all praise and glory exclusively belong to His Sacred Essence.

Narrations that specify the Greatest Name of God

- 3. It can be deduced from several narrations that the Name al-Ḥayy (the All-Living) is indeed the Greatest Name of God (al-ism al-a -am). These narrations have been reported in Ibn Ṭāwūs, Muhaj al-da -awāt, pp. 316-324. Three of these narrations are as follows:
 - 1. Imām Ridā (peace be upon him) said,

اسْمُ اللهِ الأَكْبَرُيّاحَيُّ يَافَيُومُ.

The Greatest Name of God is O All-Living, O Upright (yā Ḥayyu yā Qayyūm).

Muhaj al-da 'awāt, p. 317.

2. Abū Umāmah narrated from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family):

اسْمُ اللهِ الْأَعْظُمُ الَّذِي إِذَا دُعِيَ بِهِ أَجَابَ فِي سُورٍ ثَلَاثٍ: فِي الْبَقَرَةِ وَ ٱلْ عِمْرَانَ وَطه.

The Greatest Name of God—which He would answer when called by—is in three chapters [of the Quran]: Chapter 2 (al-Baqarah), Chapter 3 (Ā-i 'Imrān) and Chapter 20 (Ṭā-Hā).

Then Abū Umāmah said,

The verse in Chapter 2 is \overline{Ayat} al-Kursī (2:255); the verse in Chapter 3 is "God is Who there is no god but Him, the All-Living, the Upright" (3:2); and the verse in Chapter 20 is "And all faces shall be humbled unto the All-Living, the Upright" (20:111).

Ibid.

3. Sikkin ibn 'Ammār narrated that he saw Imām Mūsá ibn Ja'far (peace be upon them) prostrating under the spout of Ka'bah and reciting the Greatest Name of God as follows:

يَانُورُ يَا قُدُوسُ، يَانُورُ يَاقُدُوسُ، يَانُورُ يَاقُدُوسُ، يَاحَيُ يَاكِيُومُ، يَاحَيُ يَاكَيُومُ، يَاحَيُ يَاكَيُومُ، يَا حَيُ يَاكَيُومُ، يَا حَيُ يَاكَيُومُ، يَا حَيُ لَا يَوْدُ يَا خَيُ لَا يَوْدُ يَا خَيُ حِينَ لَا حَيْ، يَاحَيُ حِينَ لَا حَيْ، يَاحَيُ حِينَ لَا حَيْ، يَاحَيُ حِينَ لَا حَيْ، يَاحَيُ لِا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، يَا حَيْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ بِلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ بِلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ بِلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ يَا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ بِلَا إِلَهَ إِلَا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ يَا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ. تَلَانًا، وَ إِلَا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ بِلَا إِلَهَ إِلَا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ يَا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ. تَلَانًا، وَ أَسْتَابُ إِلَهُ إِلَا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ بِالْمِ إِلَهُ إِلَا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ يَا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ. تَلَانًا، وَ أَسْتَابُ إِلَهُ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ بِالْمُ إِلَهُ إِلَّا أَيْتِ إِلَهُ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، أَسْأَلْكَ يَا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ اللّهُ وَاللّهُ وَاللّهُ إِلَهُ إِلَّالُكَ بِلَا إِلَهُ إِلَّا أَنْتَ اللّهُ وَاللّهُ إِلَهُ إِلَا أَنْتَ اللّهُ وَاللّهُ وَاللّهُ إِلَهُ إِلّهُ إِلَهُ إِلّهُ إِلْكَ إِلْهُ إِلّهُ إِلّهُ إِلّهُ إِلّهُ إِلْهُ إِلْهُ إِلّهُ إِلّهُ إِلّهُ إِلْهُ إِلّهُ إِلْهُ إِلّهُ إِلْهُ إِلْهُ إِلْهُ إِلْهُ إِلْهُ إِلّهُ إِلْهُ إِلَهُ إِلْهُ وَالْمُ الْمُؤْمِنِ الْمُؤْمِنِ الْمُؤْمِنِ الْمُؤْمِ الْمُؤْمِنِ الْمُؤْمِنَ أَنْ أَلْمُ الللّهُ وَاللّهُ أَلْمُ الْمُؤْمِنَا أَلْمُ أَ

O Light, O Sacrosanct (three times); O All-Living, O Upright (three times); O All-Living who dieth not (three times); O All-Living when there was nothing alive (three times); O All-Living, there is no god but Thee (three times)! I ask Thee by [the fact] that there is no god but Thee (three times); I ask Thee, O One by Whom there is no god (three times); and I ask Thee by Thy Name—by the Name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate, the All-Mighty, the All-Strong [or the All-Evident] (three times).

Ibid. pp. 321-322; Kaf'amī, Junnat al-amān, pp. 310-311.

- 4. The science of numbers (film al-a tlād) is an independent discipline and different from the science of letters (film al-hurūf). It is partly covered in jafr (another science of letters).
- 5. Everything is written and inscribed by the *qalam* (the Pen of Divine Decree), including the spiritual secrets. Letter *lām* is one of the three core

letters of the the word *qalam*, which is composed of $q\vec{a}f$, $l\vec{a}m$ and $m\bar{n}n$ (*q-l-m*). That is why the letter $l\vec{a}m$ would bring about the inscription of spiritual secrets on the heart and the unveiling of realities for the invoker.

6. This is a long narration, reported from Şaqr ibn Abī Dulaf, from Imām 'Alī al-Naqī (peace be upon him). A summary of the narration is:

... قُلْتُ: يَاسَيْدِي، حَدِيثُ يُرْوَى عَنِ النَّبِيِ (صلى الله عليه و آله) لَا أَغْرِثُ مَعْنَاهُ. قَالَ: وَمَا هُو؟ قُلْتُ: قَوْلُهُ لَا تُعَادُوا الأَيَّامَ فَتَعَادِيكُمْ، مَا مَعْنَاهُ؟ فَقَالَ: نَعَمْ، الأَيَّامُ خَنُ مَا قَامَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَ الأَرْضُ، فَالسَّبْثُ اللهُ رَسُولِ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه و آله)، وَ الأَحَدُ أُمِيرُ المُؤْمِنِينَ (عليه النظم)، وَ الإِنْتَيْنِ الْحَسَنُ وَ الْحَسَنُ وَ الشَّلَانَاء عَلِي بَنُ الْحُسَنِينَ وَحَمَّدُ بَنُ عَلِي وَ جَعْفَرُ بَنُ السَلام)، وَ الأَرْبِعَاء مُوسَى بَنُ جَعْفَرُ وَ عَلِي بَنُ مُوسَى وَ مُحَمَّدُ بَنُ عَلِي وَ أَنَا، وَ الْحَيْسُ ابْنِي الْحَسَنُ، وَ الْخَسَمُ ابْنُ الْحَسَنُ وَ الْحَسَمُ ابْنِي اللّهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ وَاللّهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللّهُ عَلَى اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللّهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ اللهُ عَلَى اللهُ ال

...I asked the Imām about the meaning of a Prophetic tradition, "Do not show enmity toward the days, otherwise they will show enmity toward you." The Imām said, "Yes [that is true]. We are the days, as long as the heavens and the earth subsist. Saturday is the name of the Messenger of God; Sunday is the name of the Commander of the Faithful; Monday is the name of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn; Tuesday is the name of 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī and Ja'far ibn Muḥammad; Wednesday is the name of Mūsa ibn Ja'far, 'Alī ibn Mūsa, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī and me; Thursday is the name of my son al-Ḥasan; and Friday is the name of his son, toward whom the followers of truth shall gather." Then the Imām told me, "You should leave now, for I do not find it safe for you to stay."

Ibn Ṭāwūs, Jamāl al-usbū, p. 35ff, reported from Ṣadūq, Ma āmī al-akhbār, pp. 123-124. The late Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs has then reported a narration from Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāwandī that presents the specific daily ziyārahs for each Imām.

- 7. That is, between every obligatory prayer and its supererogatory (nafilah) prayers.
- 8. It means to say 'Alī as the possessor of the Greatest Guardianship (al-wilāyat al-kubrá).
- 9. The verses of Sovereignty (mulk) are verses 3:26-27.
- 10. [tr: Perhaps "if possible" here means that he did not practice this litany every day, but he tried to observe it whenever he could. In other words,

it was not among the required litanies at that stage. Alternatively, "if possible" could mean if his spiritual mood and condition permitted, especially that the Name *Allāh* could be a heavy invocation to bear.]

- 11. This litany is adopted from a verse in the Quran which mentions a supplication by Prophet Job (Ayyūb, 21:83). The only difference is that the verse does not include the term "My Lord" (Rabbi).
- 12. This litany is adopted from a verse in the Quran which mentions a supplication by Prophet Jonah (Yūnus, 21:87). The only difference is that the verse does not include the vocative particle $Y\bar{a}$ ("O").
- 13. It means that I recited each of these litanies a thousand times at the end of the night over two forty-day periods. For example, I observed lā ilāha illā Allāh one thousand times in two forty-day periods, then did the same for lā ilāha illā hū (during another two forty-day periods), then did the same for Allāh, then for Hū, then for Chapter 112, and then for Chapter 87. I did each of them separately, in two forty-day cycles. And throughout all of these forty-day cycles [a total of 12 cycles], I recited Āyat al-Kursī (2:255) after the obligatory prayers. Also, the one thousand times of recitation is the times that each litany was recited overall during the two forty-day periods, not every day. In other words, one thousand times of each litany was spread over eighty days. Otherwise, it is impossible to recite Chapter 87 one thousand times in one saḥar (the last hours of the night), let alone reciting all of these litanies together.
- 14. That is, this litany is to be observed at one's leisure, not when one is in a rush or is pressed for time.
- 15. When reciting Alläh, the followers of some sects and orders join the word with $H\bar{u}$ ("He"). They utter this litany by the tidal method (jazr wa madd), where they raise their heads upon reciting Alläh and lower them when reciting $H\bar{u}$. Since they recite the words Alläh and $H\bar{u}$ nonstop, the "h" at the end of Alläh is merged and combined with the "h" at the beginning of $H\bar{u}$, and thus the two words are recited together as Alläh \bar{u} (with one "h"). This is an obvious mistake. That is why the late author explicitly says that when uttering the Glorious Name Alläh, one should stop at the last letter, "h" ($h\bar{a}$).

What if one recites $All\vec{a}h$ alone and not together with $H\vec{a}$? Even in that case, the person should stop at letter $h\vec{a}$? Otherwise, the word would be recited as $All\vec{a}hu$, where the short vowel "u" (dammah) is intended for connecting one word to the next one. Then, since the initial hamzah (the first letter "A") is a kind of hamzah that is dropped when $All\vec{a}h$ is connected to a preceding word, the litany would change form and sound like $hull\vec{a}$ [that is once the continuous chain gets going: $All\vec{a}hu$ - $ll\vec{a}h$ - $ull\vec{a}h$ - $ull\vec{a}h$...]. Therefore, the word would sound completely differently, and that is like a distortion of the litany. However, if one stops at letter $h\vec{a}$, then he would have to start again and utter the initial

hamzah. This way, there would be no alteration to the pronunciation of the litany.

16. [tr: What should be noted here is that engaging in more than one litany during the same forty-day cycle is only permissible for litanies that are congruent and do not oppose the impact of one another. Otherwise, litanies that represent God's majesty should not be mixed with those that exemplify His beauty. Likewise, litanies that cut off the person from other-than-God by means of afflictions are at odds with litanies that are intended for respite, expansion and sustenance. A wisdom behind not elaborating on these points in the text is to prevent the adoption of these practices by unattended novices. These procedures and litanies should be undertaken only under the supervision of an expert.]

The comments of an unknown transcriber

17. The transcriber has not identified himself, but in the margin of some of the manuscripts he has been identified as "The father of Sayyid Mustafá Khwānsārī." At any rate, Baḥr al-ʿUlūm's Treatise has already ended, and what follows from here on [in the text, not the annotations] is only the words of the transcriber and do not belong to the Treatise. In fact, it would have been better to omit this material as there is no benefit to it.

Enoch's supplication

18. The supplication of Prophet Idrīs (Enoch, peace be upon him) consists of forty Divine Names by which Idrīs called his Lord. Each Name is followed by a statement as the consequence of that Name. For example:

...O Retributer of the servants—so they all stand humble in His awe.

O Creator of whoever is in the heavens and the earths—so to Him is the return of them all...

These Names and descriptions compose a supplication that is recommended to be recited at the time of saḥar (the last hours of the night) in the month of Ramaḍān. It has been reported in Ṭūsī, Miḍbāḥ almutahajjid, 2:601ff, and Ibn Ṭāwūs, Iqbāl al-a māl, 1:180ff. Majlisī has quoted it from Iqbāl al-a māl in Biḥār al-anwār, 95:98-100. The supplication begins as follows:

سُجُانَكَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، يَا رَبُّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَوَارِنَهُ، يَا إِلَّهَ الْآلِمَةِ الرَّفِيعُ جَلَالُهُ يَا اللهُ الْمُحْمُودُ فِي كُلِّ فِعَالِدِ...

Glory be to Thee; there is no god but Thee; O Lord of everything and its Inheritor.

O God of all gods—whose majesty is exalted.

O God-who is praised in everything that He does...

The late Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs says, "I saw in the sources of this supplication that these are the words by which God—Majestic is His Majesty—elevated Idrīs toward Himself. It is among the most excellent of supplications." Ibn Ṭāwūs, Iqbāl al-a māl, 1:180.

The experts of supplication have mentioned many splendid and amazing effects for this supplication, pay a lot of attention and importance to it, and consider it effective in fulfilling all of one's wishes for this world and the Hereafter. They endeavor to recite it on a regular basis for curing diseases, repelling oppressors, bringing about a good end in both worlds, forgiveness of sins, illumination of the heart, and many other effects.

19. That is, Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs has a treatise in this regard in Arabic, which has been translated into Persian. There [in the Persian translation] it describes how to observe forty-day cycles based on forty Divine Names, and specifies the right order, conditions and rites associated with it.

The spirit of religion does not allow for resorting to minerals and the spirits of heavenly bodies

20. From the rational point of view, it is not acceptable to have recourse to any created being as an independent source for aid and support. But resorting to something as a Name of God and one of His manifestations and expressions involves no rational problem—whether that thing is Mercury, some other star, or the sacred souls of the prophets, Imāms and saints.



Sometimes a friend reflects *the* Friend, So I see him with *His* eyes, and not as an end.

See Ibn al-cArabī, al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah, 1:305 (bāb 63).

For that reason, if one asks help from a piece of straw as an independent entity, it is wrong and forbidden. However, if he asks God for help through this small being as one of His [minor] Names and Attrib-

utes, and as a window of His aid, then it would be permissible, even commendable [rationally speaking].

As with the sacred law of Islam, it is recommended to seek help from the spirits of the friends of God (awliyā), the prophets, the Imāms, the gnostics of God, and the believers—as the means and manifestations of God. However, it is not recommended to seek help from the spirits of heavenly bodies, the jinn and minerals such as wood and stone. Not only that, but it can be said that this does not agree with the overall spirit and approach of Islam. The reason for this might be that referring human beings to creatures that apparently have no life or spirit—or have weak and inferior spirits like the jinn—does not help them in their journey toward their perfection. That is why the sacred religion has allowed human beings to only deal with living creatures that have a spirit. Another possible reason for this is that paying attention to things like stars and rocks might gradually lead one toward idolatry. Hence, such recourse has been prohibited to begin with.

21. The late Mawla Ahmad Naraqī says:

Note: It is often said that whoever sees Mercury and recites the following poems—which are attributed to the Commander of the Faithful (Imām 'Alī, peace be upon him)—will be blessed with great good and much wealth:

عَطَارُدُ أَيْمُ اللهِ طَالَ تَرَفِّي صَبَاحاً مَسَاءً كَيْ أَرَاكَ فَأَغْنَمَا

O Mercury! I've been waiting indeed,

For days and nights, To see you and succeed.

فَهَا أَنَا فَامْغَنِي قُوىً أَبِلُغُ الَّنَى وَدَرُكَ الْعَلُومِ الْغَامِضَاتِ تَكَرُّماً

Now I have come, So give me some aid,

To gain gnosis, And onward I proceed.

وَإِنْ تَكُفِنِي الْحُذُورَ وَ الشَّرَّكُلَّهُ لِمَالِمِ مَلِيكٍ خَالِقِ الْأَرْضِ وَ السَّمَا

Your protection of me From evil is only

By the command of God, The source for every need.

In the annotations, the respectable scholar, Ḥasan-zādah Āmulī, says,

These lines are not in the *Divan* attributed to the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him). In fact, there is a poem there starting with the following line:



The astrologist who scared me, his brain was shut; "Mars is in Aries!" Of course, but so what?

There, Maybudī, the glossarist of the *Divan*, says, "This poem makes it clear that the ascription of the poem 'O Mercury! I've been waiting indeed...' to the Imām (peace be upon him) is not true." [Maybudī Yazdī, Sharḥ-i dīvān-i mansūb bih Amīr al-Mu ninīm 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, p. 651.] Mullā Muṣaffar [Gunābādī] says, "These lines have been attributed to the Imām (peace be upon him), and the manuscripts differ a lot on the last two lines." [Gunābādī, Tanbīhāt al-munajjimīn, p. 370.]

Narāqī, Khazāʾīn, p. 154-15. Adding the above to what we said in the previous note, it becomes evident that these poems are certainly not by the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him), for it is against the necessities of Islam to pay attention to the stars and to solicit them for some favor. [tr: Also see Nahi al-balāghah, Sermon 79.]

000

All praise belongs to God and all gratitude is to Him, for He gave me the blessing to write a concise commentary on this precious treatise in order to clarify the ambiguities and identify the sources of its narrations and poems.

...And my accomplishment is only by God; in Him I trust and unto Him I turn. (11:88)

O God! We turn our faces and hands in request to Thy Precinct of Grandeur and Majesty; we adjure Thee by those who speed in the realm of Thy love, those who burn in their passion for Thee, and those who have been absorbed and mystified by Thy Holy Threshold: Accept this inconsiderable service to the realm of moral virtues, divine guardianship, and gnosis of Thy Glorified and Sacrosanct Essence from this non-descript destitute being. We beseech Thee to make it worthy of the attention and mercy of Imām Mahdī (may our spirits be sacrificed for him), who is the axis of the realm of divine decree and predestination, and the pole of the circles of decent and ascent. We ask Thee to take us into every good in which Thou hast taken Muḥammad and his family, and to take us out of every evil out of which Thou hast taken Muḥammad and his family (may Thy peace be upon him and them all). O God, we ask Thee the good that Thy righteous servants asked for, and we seek refuge in Thee from what Thy most sincere servants sought refuge from.

The annotations were finished by grace and bliss, on Eid al-Fiţr 1385 AH (23 January 1966), by the hands of one who hopes for the pardon of his Lord, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, may God pardon his sins. And our final call is that "All praise belongeth to God, the Lord of all beings" (10:10).

888

The translation of Baḥr al-ʿUlūm's Treatise and Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī's annotations was finished by the grace of God through the hands of this lowest translator, Tawus Raja, on 6 Ṣafar 1433 AH (31 December 2011). May God help us do what we do solely for His pleasure and free of any consideration for His servants, for indeed:

...Keeping an act sincere is more difficult than performing an act. A sincere act is one for which you do not want the praise of anyone other than God, Exalted and Majestic He is...

Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:16, reported from Imām Ṣādiq (peace be upon him). I will leave the ardent seekers of the path of spirituality with the following inspirational poem by Rūmī (ghazal 765):

هله نومید نباشی که تو را یار براند

کرت امروز براند نه که فردات بخواند؟

در آگر بر تو ببندد مرو و صبر کن آنجا

ره ینهان بنماید که کس آن راه نداند

نه که قضاب به خنجر چو سر میش ببرد نهلد کُشتهٔ خود را، کُشد آنگاه کُشاند چو دم میش نماند ز دم خود کندش پر تو ببینی دم یزدان به سجاهات رساند به مثل گفتم این را و آکر نه کرم او نکشد هیچ کسی را و زکشتن برهاند دل من گرد جهان گشت و نیابید مثالش به کی ماند به کی ماند به کی ماند به کی ماند به کی ماند بیشاند
If He rejects you today, Beware, don't despair! He'll call you tomorrow; Soon you'll be there.

If He closes the door,
Do not go away;
He's testing your patience,
And whether you'll stay.

If he blocks every path,
Indeed He will show
A hidden path to you
That no one would know.

When a sheep is slaughtered,
It's not left alone;
The butcher will claim:
This is my own!

Even if you're killed
By the hands of your Friend,
You'll live by Him,
A life with no end.

But the Gracious does not Kill anyone or deprive; He's there not to kill, He's there to revive.

I searched the world, For someone alike; But does He have a like? He has no like!

NOTES ON CHAPTER EIGHT

To everyone He will —indeed as I think—Provide this drink; Provide this drink!



Notes on Prominent Figures Cited in the Book

Below is a list of the prominent figures mentioned in the in alphabetical order according to the name by which they are best known. BH and AH stand for "before" and "after" the *hijrah* (the Prophet's migration from Mecca to Medina) respectively. Corresponding years based on the Gregorian calendar are cited after the stroke.

- Abū Bakr ibn Abī Quḥāfah (c. 50 BH 13 AH/573-634): The Prophet's father-in-law, an early convert to Islam, and the first caliph after the Prophet's death. He is known as al-Şiddīq (the most truthful).
- 2. Abū Saʿīd Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsá al-Kharrāz (d. 277/890): A Sufi of great knowledge, exalted spiritual stations, and acts of divine grace (karāmāt). He was one of the first Sufis to talk about annihilation (fanā ʾ) and subsistence (baqā ʾ). He had terms of companionship with Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī, Sarī al-Saqaṭī and Bishr al-Ḥāfī.
- 3. Abū Tālib, 'Abd Manāf ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib (d. 3 BH/619): The uncle of Prophet Muhammad and the father of Imam 'Alī. He shared both parents with the Prophet's father, 'Abd-Allah. The Prophet lived in his house and was raised under his care since the age of eight. He was a man of influence in Mecca, and thus he served as a source of protection for the Prophet and the Muslims when revelation began and the polytheists started opposing them. Whether he embraced Islam or not is a matter of controversy among the Muslims. The Shias-especially based on the narrations of their Imams-unanimously believe that he was a Muslim, but used to conceal his faith in order to be able to protect the Prophet. The Sunnis are less certain and united on that, as he never officially proclaimed his faith. Perhaps the political conflict between the Umayyads and Banī Hāshim was a source of this controversy. The Umayyad machinery that publically cursed Imam 'Alī on the pulpits for half a century was not to spare anyone who had the slightest connection with him. The uncertainty about Abū Ṭālib's faith could also be a result of their propaganda and their hadith fabrication.

- 4. Aḥsāʾī, Aḥmad (1166-1241/1753-1826): A Shia scholar and a student of Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm and Shaykh Jaʿfar Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ. He later started claiming that he had divine inspirations and spiritual unveilings, and advocated some new and questionable views on a variety of beliefs including Imāmate and the Resurrection. This led into to the founding of the Shaykhiyyah branch. Thus, he was excommunicated by the Shia scholars. He is the author of over 135 books and epistles on a variety of Islamic sciences, most of which have been published.
- 5. 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (c. 23 BH 40 AH/600-661): The cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muḥammad, the first Imām of the Shias, and the fourth caliph. Shias use the title Amīr al-Mu'minīn (the Commander of the Faithful) exclusively for him. Nahj albalāghahis a collection of his sermons, letters, and sayings.
- 6. 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sajjād (38-95/659-713): The fourth Imām of the Shias, and the only adult male survivor of the battle of Karbalā². He is known as Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (the adornment of the worshippers) for the extent and quality of his worship and prayer. Al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah is a collection of his supplications, and Risālat al-ḥuqūqis an epistle of his description of one's duties in various regards.
- 7. 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Naqī al-Hādī (214-254/829-868): The tenth Imām of the Shias. He was summoned by al-Mutawakkil (Abbasid caliph) from Medina to Samarrā³, where he was under the close watch of the government, and his associations and interactions with the people and his followers were substantially reduced. The famous al-Ziyārah al-Jāmi'ah al-Kabīrah is narrated from him.
- 8. 'Alī ibn Mūsa al-Riḍā (148-203/765-818): The eighth Imām of the Shias. He was summoned by al-Ma'mūn (Abbasid caliph) from Medina to Marw by force to be announced as the caliph's successor, but he was poisoned there.
- Amīn Jabal ʿĀmilī, Sayyid Muḥsin (1284-1371/1867-1952): A Shia scholar and an expert of many Islamic disciplines. He has many works, but is most famous for his A 'yān al-Shī'ah (10 vols.), which is an encyclopedia of Shia scholars.
- 10. Āqā Buzurg Ţihrānī, Muḥammad Muḥsin (1293-1389/1875-1970): The author of two major books of reference: al-Dharī ah iki

- taṣānīf al-shī'ah, which is an encyclopedia of Shia books (26 vols.), and *Tabaqāt a'lām al-shī'ah*, which is an encyclopedia of Shia scholars (20 vols.).
- 11. Baḥr al-ʿUlūm Khurāsānī, Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī al-Ḥusaynī al-Mūsawī (1152-1218/1739-1803): A student of Waḥīd Bi-hbahānī and a teacher of Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (in philosophy). He was born in Iṣfahān, but then moved and settled in Mashhad, where he was killed by the government.
- 12. Baḥrānī, Yūsuf (1107-1186/1696-1772): A Shia scholar and one of the last prominent traditionalists (akhbārīyyūn). He was Baḥr al 'Ulūm's teacher in Islamic law, and is especially known for his al-Ḥadā 'iq al-nāḍirah fi aḥkām al- 'itrat al-ṭāhirah (25 vols.) in Islamic law.
- 13. Bāyazīd Basṭāmī (188-261/804-874): A great Sufi master, known as the Sultan of the Mystics (Sulṭān al-ʿĀrifīn), credited with founding the school of intoxication (sukr) in Sufism.
- 14. Bihārī, Muḥammad (d. 1325/1907): An intimate student of Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī in mysticism. Tadhkirat al-muttaqīn (in Persian) is a collection of his words and letters concerning spiritual wayfaring.
- 15. Bilāl al-Ḥabashī (d. c. 20/641): An early Muslim, the Prophets treasurer, and his caller to prayer. He endured much hardship when he embraced Islam, since he was a slave.
- 16. Bishr al-Ḥāfī (150-227/767-841): A great Sufi, a scholar of hadith, and a man of piety, asceticism and knowledge. Various stories are narrated about his repentance from his sins and self-indulgence, and about why he was called al-ḥāfī (the barefooted).
- 17. Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī (d. 246/861): A famous Sufi and a man of wisdom and eloquence. He was summoned from Egypt to Samarrā³ by al-Mutawakkil (Abbasid caliph), then stayed in Baghdad for a while, and then returned to Egypt.
- Fāṭimah al-Zahrā² (c. 8 BH 11 AH/615-632): The Prophet's daughter, Imām ^cAlī's wife, and one of the fourteen Infallibles (Ma^cṣūmīn) in Shī^cism.
- Ḥabbūbī, Sayyid Muḥammad Saʿīd (1266-1333/1850-1915): One of the top students of Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī in mysticism.

He was an adept poet and scholar. He called for holy war against the British army upon its invasion of Iraq.

- 20. Ḥallāj, Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr (d. 309/922): One of the most famous Sufis and a contemporary of al-Junayd. He is noted for his apparently heretical claim that "I am the Truth" (ana "I-Ḥaqq). He was charged with heresy and thus beaten, mutilated, decapitated (or hanged) and then burnt. He has since become a legendary figure among the Sufis and many myths have grown around his character. There were apparently some political aspects involved in his hanging as well.
- 21. Hamadānī Darjazīnī, Ākhūnd Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī (1239-1311/1824-1894): A Shia scholar and a matchless spiritual master, who trained many individuals such as Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Malikī Tabrīzī, Sayyid Aḥmad Karbalā'ī and Shaykh Muḥammad Bihārī. He studied philosophy under Ḥājj Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī, and was a student of Sayyid 'Alī Shushtarī in spirituality. He is considered as the head and founder of the mystical school of many subsequent Shia mystics and scholars, including Sayyid 'Alī Qāḍī, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥaddād, Āyatullāh Bahjat and Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, who all connect to him through their chains of spiritual masters.
- 22. Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī al-Mujtabá (3-50/625-670): The grandson of Prophet Muḥammad and the second Imām of the Shias. He reluctantly accepted Muʿāwiyah's caliphate after the assassination of his father, Imām ʿAlī.
- 23. Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī al-ʿAskarī (232-260/846-874): The eleventh Imām of the Shias. He was mostly secluded and inaccessible during the six years of Imāmate, due to the political pressures of the Abbasid rulers against him, and perhaps as a preparation of the Shias for the occultation of his only child, Imām Mahdī. There is a book of Quranic exegesis (tafs īr) attributed to him.
- 24. Ḥillī, 'Allāmah al-Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf ibn al-Muṭahhar (648-726/1241-1325): A prominent Shia scholar in a variety of Islamic disciplines. He was a student of many great figures such as Khwājah Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs and Ibn Maytham al-Baḥrānī. It is famous that Sultan Muḥammad Khudābandah became a Shia and established Shī'ism across his kingdom (Iran) because of him. He is the author of many famous works includ-

- ing Mukhtalaf al-Shī'ah (9 vols.), Tadhkirat al-fuqahā' (14 vols.), Kashf al-Murād (a famous commentary of Ṭūsī's Tajrīd al-i'tiqād), al-Bāb al-hādī 'ashar, and many more.
- 25. Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī (4-61/626-680): The grandson of Prophet Muḥammad and third Imām of the Shias. He rose against the Umayyad rule, by whom he was killed in Karbalā'. The day of his death is known as 'Āshūrā' (tenth of Muḥarram) and the Shias mourn and lament its anniversary every year.
- 26. Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), Abū 'Alī Ḥusayn (363-428/974-1037): A prominent Muslim philosopher, known as Shaykh al-Ra'īs, who mastered all sciences of his time by the age of eighteen. He lived a turbulent life as a vizier and physician of the court. He is most notable for his Shifā' and al-Ishārat wa al-tanbīhāt in philosophy, and Qānūn in medicine.
- 27. Ibn Ṭāwūs, Sayyid ʿAlī (589-664/1193-1266): A Shia scholar and mystic, famous for having met with Imām Mahdī several times. He has many works especially on supplications and recommended acts of worships. Among his books are lqbāl al-a ʿmāl, al-Malhūf, Falāḥ al-sāʾil and al-Yaqīn.
- 28. 'Inwān ['Unwān] al-Baṣrī: He met Imām Ṣādiq when he was 94, where the Imām told him a long narration known in his name concerning the reality of servitude ('ubūdiyyah). One of the instructions of the late Sayyid 'Alī Qādī to his students in spirituality was to contemplate and act upon this narration: they had to write it down, keep it in their pocket, and review it once or twice a week. It can be considered as extremely effective and exhaustive manual for spiritual journeying toward God.
- Īrawānī, Sayyid ʿAlī (1301-1353/1884-1935): He was a student of Sayyid Maḥammad Kāzim Yazdī and has many works in Islamic law and principles of jurisprudence.
- 30. Işfahānī, Muḥammad Riḍā (1287-1362/1870-1943): A prominent Shia scholar in a variety of Islamic disciplines. He was a student of many great figures such as Ākhūnd Khurāsānī and Mīrzā Ḥusayn Nūrī. He was also an adept poet and linguist of Arabic. He has many works and glosses, including the Arabic translation of Baḥr al-cUlūm's treatise on spiritual journeying, Wiqāyat al-adhhān in principles of jurisprudence, and Naqd falsafah Darwīn (3 vols.).

- 31. Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju^cfī (d. c. 128/746): An intimate companion of Imāms Bāqir and Ṣādiq, who was let on many narrations which he was not allowed to disclose to anyone.
- 32. Ja'far ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (80-148/699-765): The sixth Imām of the Shias, and a descendent of Abū Bakr from the mother's side. He witnessed the fall of the Umayyad rule and the rise of the Abbasids to power. The socio-political conditions of his time gave him the opportunity to educate many students in a range of Islamic sciences.
- 33. Jāmī, Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān (817-898/1414-1492): A prominent Sufi of the Naqshbandi order, an excellent Persian poet, and a commentator of Ibn al-'Arabī. Among his many works are Nafaḥat al-uns, Lawā'iḥ, and Asha 'at al-lama 'āt.
- 34. Kabūdar-Āhangī, Muḥammad Jaʿfar (1175-1238/1762-1823): A Shia scholar and a Sufi of exalted spiritual status. Known as Majdhūb ʿAlī Shāh, he was a student of Mullā Muḥammad Mahdī Narāqī and Mīrzā Qummī. He sadly became a victim of the malicious gossips and allegations of "Sufism" in an era when any introspective or self-building lifestyle was attacked by the exoteric scholars, to the extent that he felt compelled to write a treatise explaining his beliefs to "exonerate" himself. He has many works in a variety of Islamic sciences, especially spirituality and mysticism.
- 35. Karbalā²i Ţihrānī, Sayyid Aḥmad (d. 1332/1914): A student of Mullā Ḥusayn-Qulī Hamadānī and the spiritual guide and master of Sayyid ^cAlī Qāḍī.
- 36. Kāshif al-Ghitā', Ja'far (1156-1228/1743-1813): An extremely adept Shia scholar in jurisprudence, known for his Kashf al-ghiṭā'in Islamic law. He was a student of Waḥīd Bihbahānī and Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, and a teacher of al-Shaykh al-Jawāhirī. He became the leading scholar among the Shias after the death of his teacher, Sayyid Baḥr al-'Ulūm. In addition to his knowledge and scholarship, he was a man of great piety, worship, and exalted moral virtues.
- 37. Khadījah bint Khuwaylid (c. 68 3 BH/555-619): The first wife of the Prophet Muḥammad, the first lady to embrace Islam, and the Prophet's only wife as long as she was alive. She had a considerable amount of wealth, all of which she dedicated to the cause of the Prophet and the propagation of Islam. The Proph-

et's progeny has disseminated only through her daughter, Fāṭimah. The truth about her age and her marriage before the Prophet is highly uncertain—historically speaking, anyone who was even remotely related to 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭābli was not spared the concoction of discrediting accounts and narrations.

- 38. Khūnsārī, Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim (d. 1380/1960): 'Allāmah Ţabāṭabā'ī's teacher of mathematics in Najaf.
- 39. Laylá bint Sa^cd al-^cĀmiriyyah (d. c. 68/688): It is narrated that she was a transmitter of traditions and knew many traditions by heart. According to some accounts, she died before her lover Majnūn. Also see Majnūn below.
- 40. Maḥallātī, Ismāʿīl ibn Muḥammad (1269-1343/1853-1924): A Shia scholar, a student of Mīrzā Shīrāzī and a teacher of Āyatullāh Marʿashī Najafī. He has many works in Islamic law, principles of jurisprudence, theology and ethics.
- 41. Mahdī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (born 255/869): The twelfth and last Imām of the Shias. His name is Muḥammad, and he is also titled al-Ḥujjah, al-Mahdī, and Imām al-Zamān (the Leader of the Time). He became Imām at age five when his father passed away, was accessible through four regents until 329/941, and has been in the Greater Occultation (al-ghaybat al-kubrá) ever since. According to Shīʿism, he will appear some day and establish justice all over the world.
- 42. Majnūn, Qays ibn al-Maluwwaḥ al-ʿĀmirī (d. 68/688): It is not certain whether he and his beloved Laylá truly existed or not, but the two compose the most famous and legendary symbols of love in the Islamic literature. It is narrated that Qays and Laylá grew up together and thus developed a strong love for one another. But then Qays was prevented from seeing Laylá by her father, and thus he became majnūn (insane). Various writers and poets have adopted them as the characters of their accounts of love. A collection of poems attributed to Majnūn has been published as his *Divan*. Also see Laylá above.
- 43. Malikī Tabrizī, Mīrzā Jawād (d. 1343/1925): A student of Mullā Husayn-Qulī Hamadānī and a teacher of Āyatullāh Khumaynī in spirituality. He is the author of several books including al-Murāqibāt, Asrār al-ṣalāh, and a treatise on spiritual journey known as Liqā² Allāh

- 44. Ma'mūn, 'Abd-Allāh ibn Hārūn (170-218/786-833): The seventh Abbasid caliph who inherited the vast empire of his father after killing his older brother, Amīn. He was a highly intellectual and learned caliph, and endorsed scientific discussions and endeavors.
- 45. Maytham ibn Yaḥyá al-Tammār (d. 60/690): He was a slave that was bought and freed by Imām ʿAlī. He became one of the intimate companions of the Imām, whom the Imām taught many secrets, including how and where he will be hanged by Ibn Ziyād.
- 46. Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Bāqir (57-114/676-733): The fifth Imām of the Shias. His father was the son of Imām Ḥusayn, and his mother was the daughter of Imām Ḥasan. The declining Umayyad rule gave him the opportunity to revive and spread the Islamic sciences, a task that was to be continued by his son Ja'far.
- 47. Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Taqī al-Jawād (195-220/811-835): The ninth Imām of the Shias. He became Imām at age of seven, yet he was the leading figure of his time in the Islamic sciences.
- 48. Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl Bazīʿ: A companion of the seventh, eighth and ninth Imāms, and a reliable and righteous figure among the Shias.
- 49. Murtaḍá Mūsawī, al-Sharīf ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn (355-436/966-1044):
 A Prominent Shia scholar in intellectual and transmitted sciences, also known as ʿAlam al-Hudá ("Emblem of Guidance"). He was the younger brother of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, the compiler of Nahj al-balāghah He has many works including, al-Amālī, al-Intisār, and Tanzīh al-anbiyā?
- Mūsa ibn Ja^cfar al-Kāzim (128-183/745-799): The seventh Imām of the Shias. He was imprisoned by the Abbasid ruler, Hārūn, for several years until his death.
- 51. Naqshband, Khwājah Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad (718-790/1318-1389): The founder of the Naqshbandi Sufi Order, which has ever been popular up to this day. He has many works in spiritual journeying and Sufism. The chain of his spiritual masters reaches the Prophet through both Imām 'Alī and Abū Bakr, though the latter is more famous.
- 52. Narāqī, Mullā Aḥmad (1185-1245/1771-1826): A Shia scholar, a student of his father Mullā Muḥammad Mahdī Narāqī, Sayyid

Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, and Waḥīd Bihbahānī, and a teacher of al-Shaykh al-Anṣārī. He has many works in a variety of Islamic disciplines, such as *Mustanad al-Shīʿah* in jurisprudence (19 vols.), *Mi ʿrāj al-sa ʿādah* in ethics, and his book of elegant Persian poetry, *Tāqdīs*.

- 53. Narāqī, Mullā Muḥammad Mahdī (1128- 1209/1716-1795): A Shia scholar and prolific writer in law, mathematics, philosophy, theology, and ethics. He is one of the ancestors of Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī (from the mother's side). His Jāmi al-sa ūdāt (3 vols.) in ethics is particularly notable.
- 54. Nūrī, Mīrzā Ḥasan (d. after 1267/1851): The son and a student of the renowned philosopher, Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī. Some have considered him superior to his father in terms of acumen and aptitude. He was a teacher of Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshahʾī, Āqā ʿAlī Mudarris (Zunūzī) and Mīrzā Abū al-Ḥasan Jilwah. He has glosses on many books of Islamic philosophy.
- 55. Qāḍī, Sayyid ʿAlī (1282-1366/1866-1947): A Shia scholar in many fields, but especially notable as a master of mysticism (Sufism). He trained many students including ʿAllāmah Ṭabaṭabāʾī and Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥaddād.
- 56. Qūchānī (Hātif), 'Abbās (d. 1411/1991): A student of Sayyid 'Alī Qāḍī and his appointed successor. Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī benefitted from his spiritual instructions during his years of study in Najaf.
- 57. Qummī, Mīrzā Abū al-Qāsim Jīlānī (1152-1231/1739-1816): A Shia scholar and Source of Emulation. He was a student of Waḥīd Bihbahānī and a teacher of Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī. He is known for his piety, and many acts of grace (karāmāt) have been attributed to him after his death. He has many works including his famous Qawānīn al-uṣūl in principles of jurisprudence.
- 58. Qumshah'ī, Muḥammad Riḍā (1241-1306/1826-1888): One of the great Muslim philosophers and mystics that appeared after Mullā Ṣadrā. He has glosses on many famous works of philosophy and mysticism.
- 59. Rabī^c ibn Khuthaym: (d. 63/683): A close companion of Imām ^cAlī, who is notable for his worship, solitude, ascetic practices, and the extent of his control over his speech. He has narrated from

- Ibn Mas^cūd, and his narrations are widely quoted in the Sunni books of hadith and *tafsīr*:
- 60. Sabzawārī, Ḥājj Mullā Hādī (1212-1289/1797-1872): The most prominent Muslim philosopher after Mullā Ṣadrā and a follower of his school. He is also notable for his asceticism, as well as his elegant poetry. He has glosses on many works of Mullā Ṣadrā and on Rūmī's Mathnawī, though he is most famous for his Ghurar al-farā'id known as Sharḥ al-manzūmah
- 61. Salmān al-Fārsī (d. 35/656): A Persian sage who left his homeland in search of the promised prophet of Islam. He was captured and sold as a slave, but after much hardship he met the Prophet Muḥammad and became a close companion of him and his Household. He was honored by the tradition, "Salmān is one of us—the Household of the Prophet [Ahl al-Bayt]."
- 62. Sarī al-Saqaṭī (d. 253/867): A prominent Sufi, a student of Maʿrūf al-Karkhī, and the uncle and teacher of al-Junayd. He was a man of great piety, worship and ascetic practice.
- 63. Shīrāzī, Sayyid 'Abd al-Hādī (1305-1382/1888-1962): A Shia scholar of jurisprudence, who was also an adept poet of both Arabic and Persian. He was a student of Ākhūnd Khurāsānī.
- 64. Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn (1319-1402/1902-1981): A prominent Muslim scholar who is most famous for his grand exegesis of the Quran—al-Mīzān—by which he established the method of interpreting the verses of the Quran using the other verses of the Quran. He breathed a new life in the Shia seminaries by establishing courses of Quranic exegesis and Islamic philosophy. Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī was a close student and friend of him for several years.
- 65. Ṭalḥah ibn ʿUbayd-Allāh (28 BH 36 AH/596-656): An early Muslim and a generous man, known as the Ṭalḥah of good and the Ṭalḥah of generosity (*Ṭalḥat al-khayr* and *Ṭalḥat al-jūd*). He was a courageous warrior who became handicapped in the way of Islam. He became extremely critical of the third caliph (ʿUthmān), and was an influential figure in his assassination. He was the first person to pay allegiance to Imām ʿAlī, but he soon changed his mind and became one of the leaders of the Battle of Jamal against the Imām. He was killed in Jamal.

- 66. Țihrānī, 'Abbās (1309-1385/1892-1965): A Shia scholar of great spiritual stations. He was a student of Mīrzā Jawād Āqā Malikī Tabrīzī and a teacher of the editor, Āyatullāh Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī in Qum. He was also a close friend of Āyatullāh Khomeini.
- 67. Waḥīd Bihbahānī, Muḥammad Bāqir (1118-1206/1706-1792): A Shia scholar and the reviver of the principles of jurisprudence (uṣūl al-fiqh) in the Shia seminaries. He has many works in a variety of Islamic sciences, and was Baḥr al-culūm's teacher in principles of jurisprudence.

Bibliography

- A Shi'ite Anthology, selected and with a foreword by 'Allāmah S.M.Ḥ. Ṭabaṭabā'ī; trans. with explanatory notes by W.C. Chittick (London: Muhammadi Trust, c1980).
- Abū Dāwūd, Sunan Abī Dāwūd (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1990).
- Abū 'Alī Ḥā'irī, Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Māzandarānī, Muntahá al-maqāl fī aḥwāl al-rijāl (known as the Rijāl of Bū 'Alī) (Qum: Mu'assasat Āl al-Bayt li-Iḥyā' al-Turāth, 1416/1995).
- Abū Nu^caym al-Işbahānī, Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd-Allāh, Ḥīlyat al-awliyāʾ wa ṭabacat al-aṣfiyāʾ (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿllmiyyah, 1988).
- ʿAjlūnī, Ismāʿīl ibn Muḥammad, Kashf al-khafāʾ wa muzīl al-ilbās ʿūmmā ishtahara min al-aḥādīth ʿalá alsinat al-nās (3rd ed., Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1988).
- ^cAlī ibn Mūsá al-Riḍā, *Fiqh al-Riḍā* (Mashhad: Mu^assasat Āl al-Bayt, 1406/1985).
- ^cĀmilī, Shaykh Bahā^a al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn, al-Kashkūl (6th ed., Beirut: Mu^aassasat al-A^clamī lil-Maṭbū^cāt, 1403/1983).
- Amīn 'Āmilī, Sayyid Muḥsin al-Ḥusaynī, A 'yan al-Shī'alı (Beirut, Dar al-Ta'āruf, 1983).
- Āqā Buzurg al-Ṭihrānī, Muḥammad Muḥsin, al-Dharī ʿah iki taṣānīf al-Shī ʿah (3rd ed., Beirut: Dār al-Aḍwāʾ, 1983).
- 'Aṭṭār, Farīd al-Dīn, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā*', annotated and ed. by M. Isti'lāmī (Tehran: Zavvār, 2007).
- 'Awfi, Muḥammad, Jawāmi' al-liikāyāt wa lawāmi' al-riwāyāt, ed. Muḥammad Mu'īn (Tehran: Ibn Sīnā, 1961).
- 'Ayyāshī, Muḥammad ibn Mas'ūd, Kitāb al-tafsīr (Qum: Chāpkhānah 'Ilmiyyah, 1380/1961).
- Baḥrānī, Maytham ibn ʿAlī, Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah (Tehran: Manshūrāt Muʾassasat al-Naṣr, 1959).
- Barqī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, al-Maḥāsin (Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1951).
- Bayḍāwī, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar, Anwār al-tanzīl wa asrar al-ta ʾwīl (Taſsīr al-Bayḍāwi) (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1418/1998).
- Bayhaqı, Ahmad ibn al-Ḥusayn, al-Sunan al-kubrá (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1416/1995).

- Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl, Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (Istanbul: Dār al-Ṭāba'ah al- ʿĀmirah, 1981).
- Chittick, William C., Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul: The Pertinence of Islamic Cosmology in the Modern World (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007).
- Clanton, Gordon, "Jealousy and Envy," in J.E. Stets and J.H. Turner (eds.), Handbook of the Sociology of Emotions (New York: Springer, 2008), pp. 410-442.
- Daylamī, al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad, Irshād al-qul ūb ilá al-ṣawāb (Qum: al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, 1412/1991).
- Dihlawī, Shāh Walī-Allāh, Hama āt (Hyderabad: Maṭbūʿāt Akadimiyyat al-Shāh Walī-Allāh al-Dihlawī, 1964).
- Farhād Mīrzā, Mu^ctamad al-Dawlah, *Zanbīl*, ed. M. Ramaḍānī (Tehran: 2nd ed., Kalālah-yi Khāvar, 1988).
- Fattāl al-Nīsābūrī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, Rawḍat al-wāʿiz̄m (Qum: Manshūrāt al-Raḍī, 1996).
- Fayd al-Kāshānī, Muḥammad ibn Murtada, al-Maḥajjah al-baydā' fi tahdhīb al-iḥyā'(4th ed., Qum: Intishārat-i Islāmī, 1417/1996).
- Tafsīr al-ṣāfī (Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadr, 1416/1996).
- Fromm, Erich, The Art of Loving (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).
- Ghazzālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad, Iḥyā' ʿulūm al-dīn (Cairo: Lajnat Nashr al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmiyyah, 1356/1937).
- Gunābādī, Muzaffar Muḥammad Qāsim, Tanbīhāt al-munajjimīn (Tehran?, 1285/1868).
- Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd-Allāh, al-Mustadrak ʿalá al-saḥīḥnyn (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1418/1998).
- Hamadanī, 'Abd al-Şamad, Baḥr al-ma 'ārif (litho., Qum: Bīdar, 1985).
- Ḥillī, Raḍī al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Yūsuf ibn Muṭahhar (ʿAllāmah Ḥillī's brother), al-ʿUdad al-qawiyyah li-daf ʿal-makhāwif al-yawmiyyah (Qum: Maktabat Āyatullāh al-Marʿashī, 1408/1987).
- Hujvīrī, 'Alī ibn 'Usmān, Kashf al-mahjūb (Tehran: Ibn Sīnā, 1958).
- Hurr al-ʿĀmilī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, al-Jawāhir al-saniyyah fī al-aḥādāh al-qudsiyyah (Baghdad: Al-Maktabah al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1964).
- [Tafṣīl] Wasā'il al-Shī'ah ilá taḥṣīl masā'il al-sharī'ah (Qum: Mu'assasat Āl al-Bayt li-Iḥyā' al-Turāth, 1414/1993).
- Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn, *Allāh shināsī* (Mashhad: Intishārāt-i 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1423/2002).
- —— Divine Flashes of Husayn: Sermons and Sayings of the Grandson of Prophet Muḥammad, trans. T. Raja (Chicago: Great Books of the Islamic World, 2011).

- —— Kernel of the Kernel: Concerning the Wayfaring and Spiritual Journey of the People of Intellect, trans. M.H. Faghfoory (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).
- ----- Ma ʿād-shināsī (10th ed., Mashhad: Intishārāt-i Nūr-i Malakūt-i Quran, 1424/2003).
- ---- Maṭlaci anwār (Tehran: Maktab-i Waḥy, 1431-/2010-).
- —— Shining Sun: In Memory of 'Allamah Tabataba'i, trans. T. Raja (London: ICAS Press, 2011).
- Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd ibn Hibat-Allāh, Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah (Cairo: 'Īsá al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1959-).
- Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsā'ī, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī, 'Awālī al-la'ālī al-'azīziyyah fī al-aḥādith al-dīniyyah (Qum: Maṭba'at Sayyid al-Shuhadā',1983).
- Ibn al-ʿArabī, Muḥyī al-Din, al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1999).
- —— Al-Ṣalawāt al-Muḥamadiyyah, with ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nabulusī's commentary, Wird al-wurūd wa fayḍ al-baḥr al-mawrūd (manuscript).
- Ibn Fahd al-Ḥillī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, 'Uddat al-dā'ī wa najāḥ al-sā'ī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmī, 1987).
- Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad, Musnad (Beirut: Al-Maktab al-Islāmī lil-Ṭabāʿah wa al-Nashr, 1978).
- Ibn Idrīs al-ʿIjlī al-Ḥillī, Muḥammad, al-Sarāʾir al-ḥāwī li-taḥrīr al-fatāwī (Qum: Mu²assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1410/1989).
- Ibn Kathīr, Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar, al-Bidāyah wa al-nihāyah (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1986).
- Ibn Khallikān, Abū al-ʿAbbās, Wafayāt al-a ʿyān wa anbāʾ abnāʾ al-zamān, ed. I. ʿAbbās (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1398/1977).
- Ibn Mājah, Muḥammad ibn Yazīd, Sunan Ibn Mājah (ʿĪsá al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1952).
- Ibn Ma^cṣūm, Sayyid ^cAlī Khān ibn Aḥmad al-Madanī, Riyāḍ al-sālikīn fī sharḥ Ṣaḥūfat Sayyid al-Sājidīn (Qum: Mu^assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1415/1994).
- Ibn al-Şabbāgh, 'Alī ibn Muḥammad, al-Fuṣūl al-muhimmah fī ma 'rifat al-a 'Inmah (Qum: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1422/2001).
- Ibn al-Shahīd al-Thānī, al-Ḥasan, Maʿālim al-dīn wa malādh al-mujtahidīn (Maʿālim al-uṣūl), ed. M. Muḥaqqiq (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt ʿIlmī va Farhangī, 1985).
- Ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥarranī, al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī, Tuhaf al-ʿuqūl 'an Āl al-Rasūl (Qum: Mu'assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1984).

- Ibn Ṭāwūs, Sayyid 'Alī ibn Mūsá, Falāḥ al-sāʾil wa najāḥ al-masāʾil (Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb, 1406/1985).
- ----- lqbāl al-a māl (al-lqbāl bil-a māl al-ḥasanah fī-mā yu malu marratan fī al-sanah) (Qum: Daftar-i Tablīghāt-i Islāmī, 1997).
- Jamāl al-usb \bar{u}^c bi-kamāl al-"amal al-mashr \bar{u}^c (Tehran: Mu'assasat al-Āfāq, 1992).
- —— Muhaj al-da 'awāt wa manhaj al-'ibādāt (Qum: Dār al-Dhakhā'ir, 1994).
- —— Al-Yaqīn bi-ikhtişāş mawlānā ʿAlī ʿalayh al-salām bi-imrat almu ʾminīn (Qum: Muʾassasat Dār al-Kitāb lil-Ṭabāʿah wa al-Nashr, 1413/1992).
- Irbilī, ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsá, Kashf al-ghummah fī maʿrifat al-aʾinmah (Beirut: Dār al-Aḍwāʾ, 1985).
- Jalālī Shāhrūdī, Muḥammad Ḥusayn, Majmūʿat al-akhbār fī nafāʾis alāthār wa makārim al-akhlāq wa kalimāt al-aʾimmat al-aṭhār (Mashhad: Chāpkhānah-yi Khurāsān, 1394/1974).
- Jāmī, 'Abd al-Rāḥmān, *Sharḥ-i rubā lyyāt* (litho., Hyderabad: Maṭba' Bashīr Dakin, n.d.).
- Kafʿamī, Ibrāhīm ibn ʿAlī al-ʿĀmilī, Junnat al-amān al-wāqiyah wa junnat al-īmān al-bāqiyah (known as al-Miṣbāḍ) (3rd ed., Bierut: Muʾassasat al-Aʿlamī lil-Maṭbūʿāt, 1983).
- Kashfi, Jacfar, Tuḥfat al-mulūk (Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb, 2002).
- Khū'ī, Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim, Mu Jam rijāl al-ḥadīth (Beirut: Dār al-Zahrā', 1992).
- Kulaynī, Muḥammad ibn Ya^cqūb, al-Kāfī (Tihran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1388/1968).
- Khwānsārī, Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir, Rawḍāt al-jannāt fī aḥwāl alulamā wa al-sādāt (Qum: Maktabat Ismā liyān, 1390/1970).
- Khwārazmī, Muwaffaq ibn Aḥmad al-Makkī, al-Manāqib (Qum: Mu³assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1411/1990).
- Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, Biḥār al-anwār al-jāmi at li-durar akhbār al-A immat al-a ṭhār (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-Arabī, 1983).
- Majnūn Layla, Dīwān Majnūn Layla (Bombay, n.d.).
- Mālik ibn Anas, al-Muwaṭṭa² (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā² al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1985).
- Malikī Tabrīzī, Jawād, *Risālah-yi liqā' Allāh*, ed. Ş. Ḥasan-zādah (Qum: Āl-i 'Alī, 2009).
- Mashhadī, Muḥammad ibn Ja^cfar, *al-Mazār al-kabīr*, ed. J. al-Qayyūmī al-Işfahānī (Qum: Mu²assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1419/1998).
- Maʿṣūm-ʿAlī Shāh, *Ṭarāʾiq al-ḥaqāʾiq*, ed. M.J. Maḥjūb (Tehran: Kitābkhānah-yi Bārānī, 1960).

- Maybudī Yazdī, Qādī Mīr, Ḥusayn ibn Muʿīn al-Dīn, Sharḥ-i dīvān-i mans tīb bih Amīr al-Mu minīn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (Tehran: Mīrāth-i Maktūb, 2000).
- Mudarris, Muḥammad ʿAlī, Rayḥānat al-adab fī tarājim al-ma ʿrūfīm bi-al-kunyah wa al-laqab (also known as Kund wa alqāb) (Tabrīz: Chāpkhānah-yi Shafaq, 1967).
- Mufid, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad, al-Amālī (Qum: Jamā'at al-Mudarrisīn, 1403/1982).
- ---- Al-Ikhtiṣāṣ (2nd ed., Beirut: Dar al-Mufid, 1993).

A STATE OF STREET

- —— Al-Irshād fī ma^crifat ḥujaj Allāh ʿakı al-ʿibād (Beirut: Dār al-Mufīd, 1993).
- Muḥammadī Rayshahrī, Mawsūʿat al-ʿaqāʾid al-Islāmiyyah (Qum: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2004).
- Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj, Şaḥīḥ Muslim (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d.).
- Muttaqī al-Hindī, Alī ibn 'Abd al-Malik, Kanz al- 'ummāl fī sunan al-aqwāl wa al-af 'āl (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1989).
- Najjād, Aḥmad ibn Salmān, al-Radd 'alá man yaqūhı al-Qur'ān makhlūq(Kuwait: Maktabat al-Ṣaḥābat al-Islāmiyyah, 1400/1980).
- Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, 'Abd-Allāh ibn Muḥammad, *Mirṣād al-ʿihād min al-mabda ʾilá al-ma ʿād* (Tehran: Kitāb Furūshī-i Islāmiyyah, 1958).
- ---- Risālah-yi 'ishq va 'aql (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i 'Ilmī va Farhangī, 1988).
- Narāqī, Aḥmad, Khazāʾin (Qum: Qiyām, 1999), annotated by Āyatullāh Ḥ. Ḥasan-zādah Āmulī.
- Tāqdīs, ed. Hasan Narāqī (3rd ed. Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 2003).
- Nasā'ī, Aḥmad ibn Shu'ayb, Sunan al-Nasā'ī (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1930).
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein, "The Quran and Ḥadāh as source and inspiration of Islamic philosophy," in S.H. Nasr and O. Leaman (eds.), History of Islamic Philosophy (London: Routledge, 2001).
- Nīsābūrī, al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad, Taſsīr gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa raghā'ib al-ſurqān, ed. Z. 'Umayrāt (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1996).
- Nu^cmān ibn Muḥammad al-Maghribī, Abū Ḥanīfah, Da ā im al-Islān wa dhikr al-ḥalāl wa al-ḥarām wa al-qaḍāyā wa al-aḥkām (Cairo: Dār al-Ma^cārif, 1963).
- Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī (al-Ṭabarsī), Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad Taqī, Mustadrak al-wasāʾil wa mustanbaṭ al-masāʾil (Beirut: Muʾassasat Āl al-Bayt li-Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth, 1987).
- Qayşarī, Dāwūd ibn Maḥmūd, Sharḥ-i Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikanı, ed. S.J. Āshtiyānī (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i Ilmī va Farhangī, 1996).

- Qummī, 'Abbās ibn Muḥammad Riḍā, Safīnat al-bihār (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Kitābkhānah-yi Sanā'ī, 1970).
- Qummī, 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm, *Tafsīr al-Qummī* (Qum: Mu'assasat Dār al-Kitāb lil-Ṭabā'ah wa al-Nashr, 1404/1983).
- Qummī Ḥimyarī, 'Abd-Allāh ibn Ja'far, Qurb al-isnād (Qum: Mu'assasat Āl al-Bayt li-Iḥyā' al-Turāth, 1413/1993).
- Qumshah'ī, Muḥammad Riḍā, Majmū'ah āthār-i ḥnkīm-i ṣahbā, researched and ed. by Ḥ. Nājī Iṣfahānī and Kh. Bahrāmī Qaṣr-Chamī (Iṣfahān: Kānūn-i Pazhūhish, 1999).
- Qundūzī, Sulaymān ibn Ibrāhīm, Yanābī al-mawaddah li-dhawī al-qurbá (Tehran: Dār al-Uswah, 1416/1995).
- Qurṭubī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad, al-Jāmi li-aḥkām al-Qur ān (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-Arabī, 1985).
- Qushayrī, 'Abd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin, Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism, trans. A.D. Knysh, reviewed by M. Eissa (Reading: Garnet Publishing, 2007).
- Rāwandī, Faḍl-Allāh ibn 'Alī, al-Nawādir (Qum: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1998).
- Rūmī, Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn, *Lubb-i lubāb-i Mathnawī*, selection by Mullā Ḥusayn Kāshifī, ed. and introduced by S. Nafīsī (Qum: Maṭbūʿāt-i Afshārī, 1965).
- Sabzawārī, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad, Jāmiʿ al-akhbār (also called Maʿārij al-yaqīn fī uṣūl al-dīn), ed. ʿA. Āl Jaʿfar (Qum: Muʾassasat Āl al-Bayt li-Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth, 1414/1993).
- Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm, Asfār (al-Ḥikmat almuta ʿāliyah fī al-asfār al-ʿaqliyyah al-arba ʿah) (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1981).
- Mafātiḥ al-ghayb (Tehran: Muʾassasah-yi Muṭālaʿāt va Taḥqīqāti Farhangī, 1984).
- —— Al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah fi al-manāhij al-sulūkiyyah, ed. and annotated by S.J. Āshtiyānī (2nd ed., Mashhad: Markaz-i Nashr-i Dānishgāhī, 1981).
- Tafsīr al-Qur ʾān al-karīm (Qum: Bīdār, 1982-).
- Şadūq, Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, al-Amālī (Qum: Muʾassasat al-Baʿthah, 1417/1996).
- —— Al-Hidāyah fi al-uṣūl wa al-fur \bar{u}^c (Qum: Mu'assasat al-Imām al-Hādī, 1418/1997).
- —— Ilal al-sharāi (Najaf: Al-Maktabat al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1966).
- Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni 'mah (Qum: Mu'assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1984).
- —— Al-Khiṣāl (Qum: Jāmicat al-Mudarrisīn, 1403/1983).

- ---- Ma fānī al-akhbār (Qum: Intishārat-i Islāmī, 1982).
- —— Man lā yaḥḍuruhu al-faqīh (Qum: Jamā'at al-Mudarrisīn, 1404/1984).
- ---- Al-Tawḥīd (Qum: Jāmiʿat al-Mudarrisīn, 1387/1967).
- ---- Thawab al-a Inal wa Siqabal-a Inal (Qum: Amīr, 1989).
- —— *'Uyūn-i akhbār al-Riḍā* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'lamī lil-Maṭbū'āt, 1984).
- Şaffar al-Qummi, Abū Jaʿfar, Baṣāʾir al-darajāt fī faḍāʾil Āl Muḥammad (Tehran: Muʾassasat al-Aʿlami, 1983).
- cAbd al-Razzāq ibn Hammām al-Ṣancānī, al-Muṣannaf, researched, annotated and ed. by Ḥ.R. al-Aczamī (2nd ed., Johannesburg: al-Majlis al-cIlmī, 1983).
- Sarakhsī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad, al-Mabsūṭ (Miṣr: Maṭbaʿat al-Saʿādah, 1324/1906).
- Shāfi'i, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs, al-Umm (2nd ed., Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1983).
- Shahīd al-Awwal, Muḥammad ibn Makkī, al-Durrah al-bāhirah min al-aṣdāf al-tāhirah (Qum: Zā'ir, 2000).
- —— Al-Dur ūs al-shar 'iyyah fi fiqh al-Imāmiyyah (Qum: Mu'assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1414/1993).
- Shahīd al-Thānī, Zayn al-Dīn ibn 'Alī, Asrār al-ṣalāh, in Majmū'at al-rasā il (Qum: Maktabat Āyatullāh al-Mar'ashī, 1404/1983).
- ---- Ḥaqāʾiq al-īmān: maʿi risālatay al-lqtiṣād wa al-ʿAdālah, ed. S.M. al-Rajāʾi (Qum: Maktabat Āyatullāh al-Marʿashī, 1409/1988).
- Munyat al-murīdfī adab al-mufīd wa al-mustafīd (Qum: Maktab al-Islām al-Islāmī, 1989).
- Sha'rānī, 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad, Lawāqiḥ al-anwār fī tabaqāt al-akhyār (al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrá) (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1988).
- Lawāqiḥ al-anwār al-qudsiyyah fī bayān al-ʿuḥūd al-Muḥammadiyyah (Cairo: Muṣtafá al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1973).
- Sharīf, Muḥammad Bāqir, al-Jāmi al-shawāhid (litho., Tehran, 1880).
- Sharīf al-Radī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn, al-Majāzāt al-nabawiyyah (Qum: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2001).
- Shūshtarī, Qāḍī Nūr-Allāh, Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq wa izhāq al-bāṭil, annotated by S.S.D. al-Najafī (Qum: Maktabat Āyatullāh al-Mar^cashī, 197-).
- Suhrawardī, 'Umar ibn Muḥammad, 'Awārif al-ma 'ārif, published along with Ghazzālī, Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2004).
- Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn, al-Jāmi al-Ṣaghīr fī aḥādīth al-bashīr wa al-nadhīr (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 2002).

- Țabarī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr, Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur an (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1412/1992).
- Tabāṭabā²ī, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn, Shi'ite Islam, trans., ed., introduced and annotated by S.H. Nasr (Albany: SUNY, 1975).
- —— al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur an (2nd ed., Beirut: Mu assasat al-A amī, 1970).
- Țabrisī (Țabarsī), ^cAlī ibn al-Ḥasan, *Mishkāt al-anwār fi ghurar al-akhbār* (2nd ed., Najaf: Al-Maktabat al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1965).
- Țabrisi (Țabarsi), Fadl ibn al-Ḥasan, Majma al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur ān (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'lamī, 1995).
- Țabrisī (Țabarsī), al-Ḥasan ibn al-Faḍl, *Makārim al-akhlāq* (Beirut: Mu³assasat al-Aʿlamī lil-Maṭbūʿāt, 1972).
- Thaqafi al-Kūfi, Ibrāhim ibn Muḥammad, al-Ghārāt, ed. S.J.D. al-Muḥaddith (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āthār-i Millī, 1395/1976).
- Tirmidhī, Muḥammad ibn Īsā, Sunan al-Tirmidhī (al-Jāmi al-ṣaḥīḥ) (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1983).
- Tolle, Eckhart, A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose (New York: Dutton/Penguin Group, 2005).
- Ţurayḥī, Fakhr al-Dīn, Majma cal-baḥrayn (Tehran: Murtaḍawī, 1996).
- Turkah Işfahānī, 'Alī ibn Muḥammad, Chahārdah risālah-yi Fārsī, ed. 'A. Mūsavī Bihbahānī and I. Dībājī (Tehran: Chāpkhānah-yi Firdawsī, 1972).
- —— Tamhīd al-qawāʿid (Tehran: Vizārat-i Farhang va Āmūzish-i ʿĀlī, 1981).
- Tūsī, Shaykh Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, al-Amālī (Qum: Dār al-Thaqāfah, 1414/1993).
- ---- lkhtiyār ma rifat al-rijāl (known as Rijāl al-Kashshī) (Mashhad: Dānishgāh-i Mashhad, 1409/1989).
- —— Al-Khilāf (Qum: Mu'assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1407/1987).
- —— Miṣbāḥal-mutahajjid (Beirut: Muʾassasat Fiqh al-Shīʿah, 1991).
- —— Tahdhīb al-aḥkām fi sharḥ al-Muqni 'ah lil-Shaykh al-Mufīd, ed. and annotated by S.Ḥ. al-Mūsawī al-Kharsān (Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1407/1986).

Index of Quranic Verses

Verse	Page	Verse	Page
1:5	3	5:26	121
2:51	121	5:54	61, 69
2:115	136	5:64	xxxi
2:131	50, 51	5:105	χv
2:138	165	6:70	<i>7</i> 7
2:155-156	229	6:71	34
2:156	53	6:120	34
2:163	113	6:122	54
2:208	39	7:138	146
2:255	110, 272, 274	7:142	121
2:256	165	7:172	223
2:257	xxvii	7:201	86, 245
3:2	272	7:205	66, 260
3:19	41	8:2	44
3:26-27	273	9:20	35
3:133	72	9:20-22	27
3:144	34	9:31	147
3:159	xxxvii	9:41	26
3:167	30	9:111	54
3:169	19, 23, 53, 184	9:128	xxxvii
3:185	54	9:129	98
4:41	117	10:10	10, 279
4:61	31	10:89	127
4:65	167	11:88	278
4:78	181	12:53	180
4:79	179, 181	12:106	22, 36
4:85	xxvi	13:28	60
4:110	78	14:10	258
4:136	41, 169	14:19-20	87
4:141-143	170	14:35	49
4:142	42, 169	14:36	177
4:142-143	31	15:29	179
4:145	30, 41	15:39-40	138
4:150-151	31	15:99	64

Verse	Page	Verse	Page
16:43	81, 192	37:40	21
17:36	xxv	37:41	23
17:80	78	37:61	54
1 7 :110	211	37:74	21
18:60-82	xxiii	37:127-128	22
19:12	127	37:128	21
19:29-30	127	37:160	21
19:31	202	38:72	179
19:43	192	38:82-83	138
20:9-10	11 7	39:22	41, 42, 169
20:14	265	39:36	xxviii
20:82	64	39:65	50
20:111	272	39:68	54
21:7	81, 192	40:9	54
21:35	54	40:40	149
21:83	274	40:65	107, 146
21:87	180, 274	42:11	98
22:78	xxix, 37	42:51	140
23:1	60	43:36	61, 85, 105
23:1-5	43	45:23	28, 49
23:3	60	45:24	264
24:35-37	104	46:15	121
24:54	64	48:4	171
24:58-59	173	48:26	171
25:31	xxviii	49:14	38, 165
25:58	xxviii	51:1 <i>7</i>	79
26:29	146	52:32	173
27:7	118	53:7	216
28:29	118	53:8-9	117
28:38	127	53:9	206, 207, 216
28:83	xxxviii	53:13	117
28:88	19, 136, 146	53:42	202, 203
29:45	60, 200	54:55	52
29:57	54	55:26-27	136
29:69	xxx, 26	57:16	43
33:72	173	58:22	171
35:16-17	87	59:10	10
36:12	208	59:18	226
36:60-61	223	60:4	78
36:60	28, 49	63:4	30
37:39-40	23	63:9	147
07.07.40	20	00.7	1-1/

INDEX OF QURANIC VERSES

Verse	Page
64:6	31
65:2-3	xxx
67:22	267
68:4	xxxvii, 189
70:4	225
72:14	41
73:8	66
79:24	127
79:25	127
81:23	216
89:27	52, 183
89:27-28	53
89:27-30	52
89:28	183
89:29	51, 52, 183
89:30	52, 183
91:9	204
98:5	21



General Index

abjad8, 109, 110, 246, 247, 248, 249,
263
Abraham. xxvi, 49, 50, 51, 98, 177,
178, 181, 192
Abū Ṭālib127, 128, 283
Adam14, 28, 49, 120, 126
affirmative 90, 252
Ahl al-Bayt <i>See</i> Household
Aḥmad al-Aḥsa iiv, 251
Akhbariiii, iv, vii
al-Amīn 3, 6
al-a 'yān al-thābitah . See permanent
archetypes
al-hadarāt al-khams See Presences
angels xxiv, 24, 51, 65, 112, 122,
135, 141, 142, 149, 150, 169,
176, 177, 198, 218
anger15, 16, 46, 47, 61, 62, 130,
131, 174
animal products30, 110
annihilation xiii, xvii, xxiii, xxiv,
35, 53, 67, 94, 130, 135, 140,
153, 154, 156, 183, 205, 216,
217, 218, 219, 228, 241, 254,
261, 283
appetite 15, 16, 47, 61, 62, 130, 131
Āqā Buzurg Ţihrānī.xiii, xxii, 2, 3,
122, 284
<i>°aqīq</i> 125
caqlSee intellect
^c Arafah 221
arba In107, 123, 139, 155, 271
aromatization78
Āyat al-Kursī110, 272, 274
Ayyūb 274
Baḥr al-ʿUlūm. i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, xi,
xiii, xviii, xxxiv, xxxv, 1, 2, 3, 4,

5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 114, 151, 236, 275,
279, 284, 285, 287, 288, 291, 293
baklı ūr See aromatization
baqā²See subsistence
bas ṭīSee dispersed
Bāyazīd 182, 188, 198, 205, 228,
230, 285
Bedouin xxxvi
Bilālxxxv, 285
breath93, 122, 258, 259
burning.33, 178, 194, 220, 228, 229
cane15, 129
certitude 40, 58, 64, 65, 166, 174,
175, 191, 194, 212
compound affirmation . 92, 94, 96,
110, 257
concealment. 79, 80, 150, 194, 210,
236
confluence of the two seasSee
majma ^c al-bahrayn
contemplation.xxxiii, 4, 60, 65, 66,
79, 83, 87, 88, 98, 99, 152, 188,
229, 266, 287
contingent potentiality 19, 20, 135
corporeal
courtesy73, 74, 81, 227
dahr
David124
dawn
desire xxvii, xxxiii, xxxviii, 27, 28,
29, 46, 47, 49, 61, 64, 74, 75,
146, 147, 148, 150, 173, 205,
228, 229, 231, 233, 234, 242,
250, 251, 258, 259
destination xvii, xxvi, 14, 16, 17,
19, 37, 52, 66, 67, 68, 75, 79, 81,
82, 83, 86, 94, 138, 139, 175,
205, 208, 217, 228, 229, 241, 250

1	
determination xvii, 8, 15, 16, 44,	greater struggle xxi, 26, 28, 29, 30,
57, 70, 71, 79, 90, 107, 139, 179,	36, 37, 46, 52, 67, 69, 144, 153,
207, 226, 228, 240, 245, 256, 263	183, 189
devotionxxxi, xxxiv, 43, 66, 72, 73,	greater submission . 37, 39, 40, 41,
81, 96, 262	42, 58, 147, 159, 165, 168, 169
dhātSee essence	greatest faith37, 51, 52, 182, 183
	-
dhikrSee invocation	greatest invocation 90, 91, 94, 110,
differentiated See mufaṣṣal	252, 255, 258
dispersed . 90, 91, 95, 253, 254, 261	greatest migration 37, 51, 183
Divine Names 20, 53, 54, 65, 81,	greatest struggle37, 52, 53, 107,
96, 135, 142, 176, 177, 183, 216,	153, 183
218, 240, 241, 245, 254, 275, 276	greatest submission 37, 47, 50, 51,
dreamxxvi, 9, 17, 182	181, 183
dreams151, 239	guardianship.iv, xviii, xxiii, xxiv,
drink 16, 17, 23, 72, 123, 132, 133,	xxvii, xxix, xxxiii, 5, 7, 20, 23,
226, 250, 281	24, 72, 78, 80, 81, 89, 95, 108,
egoSee nafs	109, 138, 140, 158, 159, 160,
Enoch See Idrīs	161, 162, 163, 164, 176, 181,
essencexviii, xx, xxxv, 24, 43, 67,	184, 194, 195, 216, 217, 218,
90, 91, 142, 161, 163, 183, 208,	232, 236, 237, 238, 239, 244,
	260, 261, 263, 273, 277, 279
217, 228, 229, 241, 244, 255,	
266, 269	habits xv, xx, xxv, xxxiii, 45, 46,
essential invocation91, 92, 94,	47, 61, 69, 107, 173, 185, 258
255, 261	Ḥāfiz xxi, xxiv, xxxvii, 141, 181,
Fa ^{cc} āl86, 87, 88, 247, 249	198, 199, 216, 264
fanā²See annihilation	Ḥallāj182, 204, 250, 286
faqīh See jurist	Hamadānī vi, xx, 152, 179, 194,
fikrSee contemplation	206, 226, 233, 244, 251, 285,
	286, 288, 289
fiṭrah192, 193, 258	haram36, 156, 158
Five Presences See Presences	
food 16, 17, 76, 99, 132, 133, 147,	Ḥasanxxxvi, 147
149, 226, 233, 234	<i>ḥaṣrīSee</i> specified
fortress 77, 162, 163, 164, 234	heart See galb
Gabriel 24, 112, 127, 128, 141, 164,	Hebrew265
259	himmah112
	Household xii, 6, 112, 161, 163,
general master81, 82, 87, 95, 96,	
226, 238, 248, 250, 261, 262, 263	292
gliayrah 34, 46, 47, 84, 89, 91, 191,	hungerxxi, 76, 110
192, 242, 243, 245, 254	Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī i, xi, xiii, xiv,
ghusl108, 110, 111	xviii, xxxiv, xxxv, 10, 114, 115,
great invocation92, 94, 110, 252,	141, 153, 211, 221, 224, 227,
258	230, 248, 257, 279, 286, 291,
	292, 293
greater faith 37, 41, 42, 43, 58, 59,	hypocrite.27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 36, 37,
153, 154, 159, 168, 169	
greater invocation 92, 94, 111, 252	41, 42, 124, 141, 154, 166, 169,
greater migration36, 37, 45, 172	170, 181, 267

GENERAL INDEX

ibäḥah 84, 90, 250	Imāms See Infallibles
Ibn al-ʿArabīxx, 141, 207, 208, 261,	immaterial intellects 51, 53, 65,
276, 288	141, 142, 149, 176, 188, 207,
Ibn Ṭāwūs .4, 5, 112, 114, 126, 201,	218, 239, 240, 254
209, 211, 221, 271, 273, 275,	immateriality 19, 48, 51, 53, 65,
276, 286, 287	135, 136, 140, 141, 142, 149,
idhā ^c ah 90, 250	176, 188, 208, 217, 218, 226,
idols.49, 84, 88, 146, 165, 177, 178,	227, 229, 239, 240, 254
266, 277	imprudenceSee jahl
Idrīs xxxvii, 57, 112, 185, 224, 230,	incoming thoughts 4, 83, 84, 85,
275, 276	86, 88, 89, 90, 173, 243, 244,
IgnoranceSee jahl	245, 246, 248, 250, 262
ikhlāşSee sincerity	Infalliblesiii, xii, xviii, xxi, xxii,
imaginal world.141, 142, 148, 151,	xxiv, xxvi, 9, 74, 98, 108, 112,
152, 176, 205, 207, 208, 239, 269	139, 144, 159, 161, 164, 166,
imagination7, 15, 16, 61, 87, 130,	168, 177, 180, 184, 194, 195,
131, 153, 249, 261	201, 237, 266, 276, 277, 283,
Imām ^c Alīxv, 40, 45, 54, 59, 64, 79,	285, 288, 290
103, 109, 126, 129, 144, 147,	intellectiii, xii, xiii, xiv, xix, xx,
149, 163, 164, 165, 166, 172,	xxii, xxiii, xxiv, xxxii, xxxiv, 14,
173, 180, 184, 190, 193, 195,	15, 17, 22, 26, 40, 42, 46, 57, 60,
196, 206, 209, 212, 213, 222,	61, 62, 70, 71, 76, 90, 93, 104,
245, 266, 273, 277, 278, 283,	120, 121, 126, 127, 130, 131,
284, 285, 286, 290, 291, 292	139, 141, 148, 151, 154, 156,
Imām Bāqir70, 80, 103, 119, 122,	173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 189,
123, 126, 127, 129, 143, 145,	192, 193, 195, 200, 204, 205,208,
157, 158, 165, 171, 174, 187,	217, 220, 222, 247, 255, 261,
223, 224, 230, 237, 268	269, 276, 277
Imam Husayn125, 195, 221, 290	intention . 25, 31, 37, 46, 71, 74, 79,
Imām Kāzim144, 145, 189, 190,	90, 147, 148, 179, 228, 259
225, 272	invocation viii, xxv, 4, 30, 31, 58,
Imām Mahdī xxxv, 7, 123, 279,	60, 61, 65, 66, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79,
286, 287	82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90,
Imām Riḍā xxvi, 9, 145, 163, 190,	91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99,
209, 212, 213, 232, 266, 271	103, 104, 105, 107, 108, 110,
Imām Ṣādiq35, 39, 40, 43, 45, 46,	111, 112, 113, 119, 147, 179,
47, 58, 66, 76, 81, 112, 122, 124,	192, 193, 197, 200, 232, 233,
125, 126, 127, 129, 132, 143,	242, 243, 244, 245, 249, 250,
144, 145, 148, 156, 158, 159,	252, 253, 254, 255, 257, 258,
164, 165, 166, 167, 170, 171,	259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 267,
172, 174, 186, 187, 189, 190,	269, 270, 271, 273, 274
191, 195, 202, 209, 211, 212,	'Inwān167, 287
213, 214, 215, 222, 223, 225,	<i>ʻirf</i> aniii, viii, xiii, xiv, xviii, xix, xx
234, 236, 237, 266, 268, 279,	istighfār88, 249
287, 288	ithbätīSee affirmative
Imām Sajjād 195, 237	i <i>ṭlāqīSee</i> unspecified

jabarutSee immaterial intellects	lesser struggle26, 27, 28, 29, 30,
Jābir ibn Yazīd 80, 143, 237, 288	36, 144, 153, 154, 156
jahlvii, xvi, xxxv, xxxvi, 34, 45, 46,	lesser submission 38, 39, 40, 41,
65, 173, 174, 175, 192, 194, 196,	57, 64, 65, 68, 159, 169
213, 231	letters
jam TSee unified	abjad248
Jāmī246, 248, 256, 288	correspondence248
jazr wa madd92, 260, 274	litany .4, 77, 82, 83, 96, 97, 99, 108,
jealousy See ghayrah	109, 110, 111, 112, 242, 254,
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	255, 260, 267, 273, 274, 275
Jesus72, 77, 127, 202, 235	majma ^c al-bahrayn 93, 207, 259, 260
Job274	
Jonah See Yūnus	Majnūn
Josephxxxvi, 180	malakūt48, 51, 65, 141, 142, 176,
Junayd178, 179, 286, 292	208, 218, 236
juristiii, iv, vi, xiii, xviii, xxii,	Malikī Tabrīzī152, 226, 251, 286,
xxiii, xxv, 5, 6, 7, 58, 61, 63, 65,	293
69, 83, 132, 208, 226, 287, 288,	manifestation.xxvii, 16, 19, 20, 25,
289, 291, 292, 293	39, 51, 53, 81, 82, 84, 89, 90,
Ka&ah 8, 36, 145, 156, 157, 158,	135, 136, 140, 154, 163, 179,
272	207, 216, 218, 220, 221, 229,
Kabūdar-Āhangī206, 288	239, 240, 241, 244, 254, 276, 277
karāmahxx, xxxv, 6, 8, 22, 34, 82,	manzil14, 120
114, 198, 229, 283, 291	marhalah14, 120
Karbalā ² īxx, 251, 286, 288	Maytham79, 166, 236, 286, 290
Kāshif al-Ghiṭā²iii, iv, v, 284	meaningful83, 88, 90, 91, 92, 96,
Khadījah128, 288	242, 249, 253, 255, 261, 262
khafiyy See non-verbal	meaningless83, 89, 90, 91, 92, 95,
khalwah See seclusion	96, 242, 250, 253, 255, 261
	Meccaiv, 14, 36, 74, 77, 78, 93, 188,
khawāṭir See incoming thoughts	208, 267, 283
khayāl See imaginal world	
khayālīSee verbal	Medinaxxxv, xxxvi, 14, 164, 208,
Khidrxxiii, xxxi, 198	283, 284
khulūşSee sincerity	Mercury3, 113, 276, 277, 278
l <i>ā huหā illā hū</i> 94, 96, 110	milk
l <i>ā ilāha illā Allāh</i> 92, 93, 94, 96, 252,	mithalSee imaginal world
257, 258, 274	moderationSee lenience
l <i>ā ilāha illā hū</i> 92, 94, 96, 252, 257,	Morning Prayer86, 88, 96, 109,
258, 274	125, 259, 263
laghwSee vain	Mosesxxiii, xxxi, 14, 117, 118, 121,
Laylá73, 243, 289	126, 127, 146, 221, 265, 266, 315
lenience . 45, 59, 70, 71, 84, 89, 222,	Mount Tur 13, 118
223	mufassal .86, 88, 109, 156, 217, 247,
lesser faith 39, 41, 42, 43, 57, 64,	248, 249
	mujmal 86, 88, 109, 247, 248, 249
68, 82, 159	mukāshafah See unveiling
lesser migration 36, 45, 153, 154,	
156	

GENERAL INDEX

mukhlaṣīn16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 136,	pluralitySee multiplicity
138, 155, 183, 195, 279	politicalxiii
Mullā Ṣadrā152, 184, 215, 219,	potentialityi, ii, xi, xxxiii, 13, 14,
291, 292	15, 16, 19, 20, 33, 35, 135, 139,
multiplicity140, 219, 240, 253	153, 154
nıurāqabahSee self-vigilance	Presences 206, 207, 208
mutawarrik78	provisionxxv, xxxi, 19, 23, 135,
nafs viii, xvi, xviii, xxi, xxiii, xxvii,	139, 149, 184, 275
xxxi, xxxii, xxxiii, xxxv, 21, 42,	Qāḍī.xx, 2, 4, 5, 151, 228, 244, 251,
47, 48, 49, 52, 53, 54, 61, 62, 63,	252, 265, 286, 287, 288, 291
65, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 82, 84, 94,	qālabī See meaningless
104, 108, 135, 142, 144, 145,	qalb xxvii, 10, 30, 38, 40, 43, 44, 60,
146, 148, 149, 150, 153, 154,	103, 107, 128, 141, 149, 171,
155, 161, 163, 176, 177, 178,	176, 193, 195, 196, 200, 204,
180, 182, 183, 191, 193, 195,	216, 253, 258, 267, 268
199, 200, 204, 212, 216, 217,	qiblahSee Mecca
223, 226, 227, 228, 229, 231,	quadratic See tarabbu c
239, 251, 252, 253, 254, 258,	Quchānīxiii, 1, 4, 291
259, 261, 269	
nafsīSee meaningful	Quddās 96, 109, 110, 211, 246, 247,
	248, 252
Najafi, ii, iv, v, xiii, xxxiv, 1, 2, 3,	quiddity179, 251
5, 7, 8, 289, 291	Qumv, viii, xiii, xxxviii, 1, 293
Naqshbandi	Qumshah'i217, 218, 291
Naraqī xxxvi, 6, 132, 227, 243, 253,	Rabī' ibn Khuthaym 231, 235, 291
254, 258, 260, 277, 278, 288,	reasonSee intellect
290, 291	reformxiii
nāsūt176, 218	remembrance See invocation
nature xv, xvii, xx, xxvii, 14, 16,	<i>rūḥSee</i> spirit
25, 46, 47, 48, 49, 54, 62, 121,	Rūmī xvi, xx, xxiv, xxviii, xxx,
130, 142, 149, 150, 152, 155,	xxxii, 155, 218, 228, 279, 292
176, 192, 193, 205, 207, 208,	Sabzawārī. 122, 123, 144, 216, 220,
216, 239, 253, 258, 264, 269	221, 264, 286, 292
Night Prayer xxxiv, 86, 88, 96, 263	saḥar96, 108, 109, 110, 274, 275
non-verbal 88, 90, 91, 94, 254, 255,	<i>şalawāt</i> 108, 111
258, 260, 261, 262	sapphire24, 140
norms See habits	seclusion v, xxi, 66, 76, 77, 78, 86,
number248	93, 107, 232, 234, 235, 269, 270,
Nūrīxxi, 201, 219, 220, 287, 291	291
orisons See supplication	secretSee sirr
particular master81, 82, 88, 89, 95,	secularism263, 264
96, 109, 238, 243, 248, 250, 261,	self-vigilance 5, 71, 224, 226
262	servitude .xviii, 14, 40, 51, 98, 167,
Paul176	168, 183, 287
permanent archetypes 135, 136,	shariah iii, xviii, xix, xx, xxii, xxiii,
140, 207, 208	xxv, xxxv, 3, 6, 8, 29, 30, 36, 63,
Plato8, 175, 176, 177	70.17.12.117, 27 07, 27, 20, 30, 40,
1 10.0	

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYING AND WAYFARING

93, 112, 156, 188, 195, 198, 205,	subsistence19, 91, 135, 138, 139,
214, 226, 238, 285, 287, 288, 289	153, 156, 207, 216, 218, 240,
sheikhSee spiritual master	252, 283
Shia. i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, xii, xviii,	subsistent 90, 252
xix, xx, xxi, xxii, 8, 45, 118, 132,	success and victory47, 52, 53, 65,
143, 148, 160, 164, 171, 189,	153, 155, 175, 183
209, 225, 256, 283, 284, 285,	Sufism ii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, xii, xiii,
286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291,	xiv, xv, xvi, xviii, xix, xx, xxi,
292, 293	xxii, xxiii, xxv, xxvi, xxxiii, 3, 6,
ShiismSee Shia	141, 176, 179, 224, 246, 248,
Shu ^c ayb xxxi, 199	258, 259, 283, 285, 286, 288,
silencexxi, 75, 76, 84, 105, 110,	290, 291, 292
230, 231, 232, 233	Sunnahxvi, xix, xxii, xxv, xxvi,
simple affirmation.92, 94, 96, 110,	168
257, 258	Sunni iv, xii, xx, xxvi, 119, 132,
sincerity xv, xxx, xxxi, xxxiv,	143, 148, 160, 161, 164, 184,
xxxv, 13, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23,	209, 210, 225, 256, 283, 292
25, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 52,	sunrise 111, 113, 263
53, 54, 66, 72, 74, 107, 118, 119,	supplication xxxvi, 5, 7, 57, 74, 93,
120, 134, 136, 137, 138, 141,	98, 108, 112, 124, 125, 177, 180,
146, 151, 152, 153, 155, 162,	182, 185, 206, 209, 221, 227,
163, 164, 180, 183, 239, 240,	236, 245, 274, 275, 276, 284, 287
271, 279	Țabāṭabāʾi i, xiii, xx, 1, 2, 4, 7, 114,
sirr. xvi, xxiv, 38, 75, 79, 80, 82, 90,	134, 148, 242, 252, 253, 265,
92, 94, 108, 113, 117, 150, 194,	286, 289, 292
195, 199, 206, 208, 209, 210,	Tabrīzī See Malikī Tabrīzī
216, 217, 218, 232, 236, 237,	tajallīSee manifestation
240, 250, 253, 254, 255, 261,	tajarrud See immateriality
272, 290, 315	tarabbu ^c 92, 260
slain23, 25, 34, 37, 141	<i>tarīgah</i> . xxii, 36, 112, 156, 188, 194,
soulSee nafs	205, 238
specified83, 86, 88, 242	ta ^c ṭīl90, 250
spiritxxvii, xxxv, 14, 25, 41, 42, 48,	tawhidxiv
63, 65, 76, 82, 83, 97, 105, 108,	tawḥīdSee unity
135, 141, 142, 164, 171, 176,	tawriyah 79, 239
177, 188, 191, 194, 206, 208,	thabtī See subsistent
216, 217, 218, 220, 234, 238,	the Truthxvii, xxxi, 4, 108, 112,
239, 241, 253, 254, 276, 277	175, 183, 207, 215, 216, 217,
spiritual master v, xxii, xxiii,	218, 219, 220, 221, 233, 261, 286
xxvii, xxx, xxxi, xxxii, 29, 59,	tidal See jazr wa madd
62, 63, 64, 65, 73, 77, 79, 81, 82,	turquoise125
83, 84, 91, 96, 107, 112, 152,	<i>'ubūdiyyah See</i> servitude
192, 223, 226, 250, 251, 252,	ulamai, ii, iv, v, vi, vii, 193
286, 290	undifferentiatedSee mujmal
springs of wisdom xvii, 17, 19, 20,	unified90, 91, 95, 253, 254, 261
23, 35, 134, 138, 139	

GENERAL INDEX

unityviii, xix, 27, 38, 53, 57, 94, 96,
148, 152, 160, 161, 162, 164,
181, 194, 215, 216, 219, 240,
253, 254, 258, 259, 261, 262
unspecified 83, 86, 242
unveiling.6, 82, 108, 151, 152, 208,
239, 240, 242, 261, 273, 284
'UnwānSee 'Inwān
urinate xxxvi, xxxvii, 123
Usuliiii, iv, vii
<i>cuzlah</i> See seclusion
vain 43, 60, 72, 168, 170, 224, 232,
266

veil .24, 94, 120, 1	
205, 208, 2	09, 210, 211, 217,
219, 2	230, 234, 256, 261
verbal.75, 76, 77,	82, 88, 89, 90, 91,
94, 95, 96, 1	07, 249, 250, 253,
254, 255, 258, 2	259, 260, 261, 262
voluntary death.	54, 176
wilāyah	See guardianship
wird	See litany
Yūnus	179, 274
ziy <i>ārah</i>	108